CITIZENS' FORUM

"CANADA'S NATIONAL PLATFORM"

by

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for

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FOREWORD

BY J.R. KIDD

Once upon a time, during a television broadcast of Citizens' Forum, the Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan appeared on the screen, and a member of a Citizens' Forum became so irate that he reached for his shotgun, and blasted the screen of his new TV set. This was either the high, or the low point in a spirited debate on Citizens' Forum, but lively talk, often followed by cooperation and social action, took place in communities all over Canada for almost twenty years, sustained often under great difficulties by the Canadian Association for Adult Education, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

In a foreword to a pamphlet about educating by radio, published in 1954, H.L. Keenleyside, then Director General of the Technical Assistance Administration of the United Nations, and President of the Canadian Institute on Public Affairs, always, himself, a responsible and active citizen, wrote:

> "During the last century the human mind and human energy have been responsible for an almost incredible galaxy of discoveries and inventions. There has never been anything like it before in the whole range of history.
>
> The taking of decisions as to how these achievements are to be used presents us with what is probably the most difficult problem facing humanity today. Will these benefits outweigh their dangers? Will modern medicine merely increase or can it help to solve the problem of population? Will worldwide direct instantaneous telecommunication strengthen or weaken international friendship? Will television continue as it has started, at least on this continent, as one of the most degrading social influences of modern times, or can its obvious possibilities by used to provide real entertainment, to spread knowledge and to improve taste? Can atomic power and thermo-nuclear dynamics be used to create a material heaven on earth or will they provide the means for the universal destruction of civilization and a grisly end to the human story?

> Canada is still trying to be a democracy, and the degree of success we attain in this effort will depend in great measure on our success in the development of an informed interest in our public affairs. Given the facts of our geographic setting, radio and the press are the only real tools that can be used for this purpose. It is therefore of great importance that we should, from time to time, examine the methods we use and the success or failure of our efforts in the employment of these tools."

Frank Peers, then Supervisor of Talks and Public Affairs for the CBC, reveals that, for a considerable period of time, there were many citizens' groups in Canada that had a direct part in shaping Canadian broadcasts on public affairs.

> "For help in the planning of its programs, the CBC calls on a number of organizations and outside consultants. It does this in the belief that programs are most likely to reach their intended audience if representatives of that audience have a voice. Moreover, it is a guarantee that programs will not be narrowed down to the interests of those who are administering and organizing them, or limited to the knowledge which the program producers happen to have.
>
> A few examples will show how this consultative process works. Cross Section, a program of special interest to business and labor, is planned in consultation with two national business organizations (the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce), and two national labor organizations, the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, and the Canadian Congress of Labour (roughly equivalent to the A.F.L. and the C.I.O.). A series on human relations, In Search of Ourselves, is planned in consultation with the Canadian Mental Health Association. The Couchiching Conference broadcasts are arranged cooperatively with a citizen group called the Canadian Institute on Public Affairs. National Farm Radio Forum has three co-sponsors: the CBC, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Canadian Association for Adult Education. Citizens' Forum is arranged in cooperation with the Canadian Association for Adult Education and several provincial adult education agencies. In addition, it has a National Advisory Board, with representatives of ten other national organizations on the committee.....

> In working with citizen organizations, the CBC does not say in effect, "Here, we'll hand you over some time - see what you can do with it." Such a procedure, it is felt, would be an abdication of the CBC's responsibility to Parliament and the Canadian people. In addition, the CBC believes that programs can be most successful only when the advice of laymen is wedded to the knowledge of radio possessed by the professional broadcaster. The CBC gets as much advice and counsel as it can from each organization, but since it has been given the public responsibility for network broadcasting, the CBC must itself decide final policy. However, within these limits, the sharing of program planning with groups outside the radio fraternity has been a real source of strength, in gaining public acceptance for new programs, in encouraging experimentation and new departures, and in supporting the integrity and independence of the Corporation."

Since the termination of Citizens' Forum, there have been many forms of broadcast information, but no real replacement, unless it was People Talking Back, in 1979, a project one hopes will not be allowed to perish. Citizens' Forum was unique. It was also unlike projects in any other country in the world, with the possible exception of the Study Circles of Sweden, which, it should be noted, were maintained, and continue to flourish, while here, we allowed Canada's National Platform to be disbanded. Many Canadians feel that was a serious mistake. Geoffrey Andrew, then National Director of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, spoke very forcibly about the neglect of national public education, and predicted serious costs in Canadian harmony, if not rectified. This was in 1967, and in 1980, as Canadians are facing the debate, and decisions concerning the Quebec referendum, and angry threats from Western Canada, they might ponder again his observations.

> "I think that we adult educators in recent years have failed to recognize the continuing elementary need to help create a unified society out of 4,000 miles of magnificent but still raw geography, ten provinces with differing traditions and aspirations, five regions

with varying economic interests and social composition, two basic language groups and a multitude of ethnic entities.

We have in my opinion tended to become too exclusively occupied with our own professionalism, and too exclusively absorbed with the continuing education of professional and quasi-professional groups. These are both very proper concerns of adult educators but we have relatively neglected adequate attention to the persistent but elementary problems of the Canadian society. As a consequence communication has broken down or not been adequately maintained between the provinces, the regions and the language and cultural groups in the light of changing circumstances.

We forgot that Canada (more than the provinces and the regions) needs programming. We forgot that people 4,000, 3,000, 2,000 or 1,000 miles apart need to be provided with opportunities for opinion exchange, confrontation, interchange and interpretation. We thought that improving the professional competence of municipal and provincial officials, correction officers, and adult educators (good and important as these functions are) needed more emphasis than attempting to see that Canadian citizens continued alert to the upcoming problems of the Canadian federation.

In my opinion, there continues to be a very great need to use public radio, tv and film to help Canadian citizens focus upon Canadian-wide problems in somewhat the same context as an annual adult educational exercise. This is, in our vast country, essential to our sense of national community."

The monograph on Citizens' Forum that follows is intended neither "to bury Caesar nor to praise him". Rather, it is a careful, unvarnished, "warts and all" portrait of the project - how it started, what it was, what were its recurring difficulties and problems, what were its themes, who were the participants, and how it affected Canadian life. I know of no other account so replete with information about how a program actually functioned, and what caused its ebbs and flows. It offers a fund of anecdotes of the program diary kind, for analysis of planning and organization.

The monograph was written by the one person who could do it justice, Isabel Wilson, who for almost the entire program, was Editor of the associated study pamphlets, and also had responsibilities as National Secretary for most of the time. Some day, a substantial part of the material in those pamphlets will be rediscovered and reprinted; it represents the best summary of significant public issues in Canada during two very lively decades. Again and again, her pamphlets would introduce Canadians first to a new topic on which little, or nothing, had been written before.

Isabel Wilson has not only a full knowledge, as a participant, of what took place at meetings and on broadcasts, she has herself organized the comprehensive archival collection for Citizens' Forum, which will provide access to an extraordinary period (when they catch up with it), to artists, writers, historians, broadcasters, and film makers. Included in that archive are recordings of programs on which many Canadians in public life appear and reappear.

There are many who think that the total corpus of Citizens' Forum pamphlets, numbering about three hundred, always on new and difficult themes, and all of them displaying her characteristic fairness and honesty, is one of the most significant contributions in Canada to public education. They are a rich lode for the historian, and some of them deserve to be reprinted.

This is a straightforward, honest, account of the project. In it appear the leaders in adult education and public broadcasting who laboured together, with more imagination than money, to produce sustained study of national issues that could lead to sound decisions and action by citizens. If there is any flaw, it is that the problems and difficulties, rather than the accomplishments, get sustained attention. Mistakes and failures are not buried (which is such a typical behaviour towards the past); they are all revealed as a guide for people to do better. The other omission is any mention of the extraordinary leadership given to the whole project by the author.

The author has kept close to the record of events; has used actual minutes, and reports. She has not speculated much on the decline and demise of the project. Her monograph should be read along with two books on national broadcasting, by Frank Peers, and Ronald Faris' book, The Passionate Educators. In these books, some of the conflicts that continued to surround the program are recounted. Some people have concluded that Citizens' Forum was eventually "murdered" by highly placed opponents who feared public discussion of the great issues. This is a diverting and melodramatic theory based on some substance, but wrong in its emphasis. The "real" story has more implications for adult education. The project always had its share of opponents, but this record indicates that malnutrition, lack of sufficient organizational support, was the chief problem of all.

Here, then, is the record of Citizens' Forum - a project that informed and encouraged Canadians for twenty crucial years - and, perhaps, the germ of programs that may yet go far beyond it in energizing people for the crucial acts and decisions of the rest of the century.

CITIZENS' FORUM - BEGINNINGS

The subtitle for Citizens' Forum was "Canada's National Platform". Its existence began in the concerns of citizens during the war years, and despite many difficulties and shifts of policy, it continued as an organized national study program until 1963.

In the Christmas holidays of 1942, a group of men and women active in adult education in Canada met in conference at Macdonald College in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec. As discussion proceeded, it became apparent that a good many of those present felt the movement was shirking its responsibility, and was failing to give the kind of positive leadership that the times demanded. There seemed to be a need both for greater understanding of the problems that confront democracy, and for an increased effort to solve them. A new program of public information and discussion - "a wholehearted campaign of public education" - seemed to be called for, indeed, seemed to be a necessity.

There is now no certain way to know the exact moment at which the Canadian Association for Adult Education began to consider a break with its long established policy of concentrating its effort on programs designed for rural Canada, and to concern itself with the problems of the country as a whole in the aftermath of war. The first step taken in an official setting would appear to be the resolution passed, late in May, 1941, at the CAAE annual conference in Winnipeg. It was moved by Watson Thomson, of the University of Manitoba's Department of Adult Education, and seconded by Donald Cameron, of the University of Alberta's Department of Extension, that the Association "promote the widest possible study and discussion of

peace aims and postwar problems in Canada and the world". The proposal was that the CAAE should invite the cooperation of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in the preparation of study materials on such topics, and, at the same time, request the collaboration of the CBC in the organization of "a coordinated series of talks" as a basis for discussion on a national scale.

But the origins of Citizens' Forum go back into old associations and earlier projects. In 1939, Neil Morrison, a recent McGill graduate, and on the staff of its Extension Department, was engaged jointly by the CBC and the CAAE to conduct research on the "listening group", long a special interest of the Association's Director, Dr. E.A. Corbett. That winter, a series of programs, Inquiry Into Cooperation, was organized, and broadcast, on the national network. This was followed a little later by Community Clinic, produced for the Quebec region under the joint sponsorship of the CBC and Macdonald College, the rural adult education wing of McGill. Neil Morrison and Alex Sim, Director of Rural Adult Education at the college, joined forces to prepare the study materials and the broadcasts for the series.

In April, 1940, Neil Morrison was appointed the assistant supervisor of the CBC's newly formed Farm Broadcast Department. Early in February, 1941, he sent a memo to the General Supervisor of Programs of the CBC outlining a plan for the organization of educational broadcasts designed for listening groups, "integrated closely with the broad organized adult education movement, which is growing throughout the country". It was a fairly detailed proposal under three heads:

1) The CBC should provide time on the air, broadcast facilities, artists' fees, and program publicity, and should be responsible for the planning, supervision, and production, of broadcasts, in consultation with the cooperating educational associations;

2) The cooperating educational associations should undertake to organize listening groups, publish necessary study materials, and publicize the project;

3) The Canadian Association for Adult Education should act as a coordinating body through which projects might be set up and cleared.

No indication of the General Supervisor's reaction to the Morrison proposal is on file. But the framework he suggested was substantially the one within which both Farm and Citizens' Forum eventually functioned.

No doubt, much discussion took place between the CBC and the CAAE in the ensuing months. But the first time the matter came up in a formal way, before the CAAE Executive would appear to be at its meeting of March 24, 1942, when Neil Morrison brought forward a proposal for the organizing of a program which would be suitable for urban listening groups. It was moved by W.H. Brittain, Dean of Macdonald College, and especially invited to the meeting, and seconded by R.W. Winter, of the Ontario Adult Education Board, "that the committee go on record as favouring a program for the urban listening groups dealing with the vital problems of the day...".

The CAAE Council, on November 16, 1942, took the first effective step toward the creation of such a national program It was moved and seconded by Neil Morrison and W.H. Brittain that a committee be named by the chair to make "an intensive study of the objectives of adult education in the postwar world", to define the general scope of a specific program designed to meet these objectives, and to outline the ways and means of financing it. Watson Thomson urged that there be no delay, and that the committee spend the coming Christmas holiday at work on such an assignment.

The Committee, complying with this sense of urgency, came together at Macdonald College, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, from December 27 to 31, 1942. Its members, named by the Executive, consisted of Dr. Corbett, Dr. Brittain, Dr. Gordon Shrum, of the Department of Extension, University of British Columbia, Watson Thomson, R.E.G. Davis, National

Council, Y.M.C.A., and Neil Morrison, with powers to add. Mrs. George V. Ferguson of Winnipeg, and Robert McKenzie, of the Extension Department of UBC, in place of Dr. Shrum, who could not attend, completed the list. R.B. Inch appointed by the CBC to be responsible for a projected series of broadcasts on postwar reconstruction to take place in the new year, was invited as "a participating guest". Some others were brought in as consultants on special questions: David Petegorsky, Wartime Information Board, Professor F.R. Scott, McGill University, and H.R.C. Avison, on the staff of Macdonald College, and a long-term associate of Dr. Corbett.

The atmosphere in which discussions were held may best be realized through a brief quotation from the introduction to the committee's report. In outlining the reasons behind its appointment by the CAAE, it had this to say: "The existing interest in 'postwar reconstruction' constituted a challenge and an opportunity to the CAAE, greater than any that has ever existed before in its history, or would be likely to recur in this generation. The whole future of democratic adult education was at stake. It was felt that there were the most urgent reasons why the CAAE should throw its whole weight behind the movement for widespread study and discussion of this vast range of problems involved in planning for reconstruction, and consider, if necessary, revising its own organizational structure to meet effectively this emergent opportunity".

The burden of the committee's report is that the worldwide conditions that led to the outbreak of war must never be allowed to recur. The world must be rebuilt, old errors and injustices swept away, economic and political wrongs righted. And this was not just a foolish dream. It could be accomplished if men and women of good will would join together in a concentrated campaign of study, discussion and action. The committee outlined 14 major themes under which national and international problems might be studied. It considered the style of broadcast best suited to the purpose and the study materials required in support of the programs on the air. The new project was not seen simply as a program for the discussion of public issues, but one to

prepare Canadians to direct their energies to the creation of a new society at home and among the nations, once the demands of war had ceased.

The committee recommended the holding of a special conference in September to arouse national concern. As wide a range of groups as possible should be invited to attend.

In February, the Executive determined that the report of the Macdonald College committee should form the basis of discussion in the plenary sessions of the CAAE annual conference scheduled for London, May 19-22, 1943. And the months preceding the London conference brought two favourable developments. The series of broadcasts, Of Things To Come: An Enquiry Into the Postwar World, was well received. The CAAE had not attempted to organize groups around the programs, but Watson Thomson had been named consultant to Mr. Inch in the preparation of the broadcasts, others close to the CAAE were appointed to the advisory committee, and much experience had been gained in the process. In April, Neil Morrison was appointed Supervisor of the CBC's Department of Talks and Public Affairs. This meant that the development of Citizens' Forum would come directly under someone already fully committed to the discussion series.

At the annual CAAE conference held in London in May, Dr. Corbett announced the formation of the new program as a three-way project, with the CBC organizing broadcasts, the Institute of International Affairs providing "research facilities", and the CAAE organizing groups. In discussing the necessary financial support for such an undertaking, he gave it as his opinion that "there is reason to believe it will be obtained".

The financial situation came up for discussion at the June 18 executive meeting at Macdonald College. Donald Buchanan, of the Wartime Information Board, was present as a special guest to speak for John Grierson, the Board's general manager. Dr. Corbett had previously approached the W.I.B. informally for financial support

for the new project. Word came now thrcugh Mr. Buchanan that the CAAE was not "sufficiently representative of the educational interests of the country" to make it eligible for a direct W.I.B. grant. The best plan appeared to be for the CAAE to advance its request to the Canadian Council of Education for Citizenship, to which the W.I.B. would be prepared to supply the funds for the CAAE support. The National Secretary of the C.C.E.C., Dr. J.E. Robbins, was in agreement with this form of cooperation, and Corbett and Brittain were members of its board. It was moved by R.E.G. Davis, and seconded by Dr. Seraphim Marion that the director should be authorized to approach the C.C.E.C. at its meeting the following day for a grant of $10,000 toward expenses of the CAAE through the first year.

At the C.C.E.C. meeting on June 19, John Grierson and Donald Buchanan for the W.I.B., Neil Morrison and Harry Avison for the CAAE, and Dr. Corbett and Dr. Brittain representing both bodies, were among those present. Dr. Corbett proposed 1) that the C.C.E.C. should make available from funds already in hand the money to organize the September conference, and 2) that the C.C.E.C. should recommend to the W.I.B. that the money necessary to permit the new discussion project to become a national program should be made available by that body.

Action was taken. It was moved by Dr. C.N. Crutchfield and seconded by Dr. Corbett, that the C.C.E.C. make available a sum not exceeding $1,000 from its funds for the organizational work of calling the conference, and by Dr. Brittain for the CAAE, and Dr. Crutchfield for the C.C.E.C., that the program proposal "should be recommended to the W.I.B. with the request that the sum of $25,000 be granted to the C.C.E.C. for the implementing of the proposal...". Mr. Grierson had supported the view that if the two organizations joined in recommending the inauguration of the new discussion program, the W.I.B. "would put up the money".

The meeting also decided that Harry Avison should organize the September conference "and that Dr. Brittain and the secretary-

treasurer of the C.C.E.C. should make arrangements for the detailed financing" of the gathering.

Under Harry Avison's chairmanship, the committee to organize the Conference on Education for Reconstruction, consisted of Neil Morrison, David Petegorsky, Donald Buchanan, Alex Sim, Stanley Rands, Gregory Vlastos, and George Edison. It does seem somewhat strange that a committee with such a national purpose should be composed entirely of staff members of Macdonald College, of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and of the Wartime Information Board. But it may be that it was largely a matter of lack of money for travel costs. Two planning meetings were held on July 10 and 13, at Macdonald College, and in Ottawa. Funds may not have been readily available for the bringing in of people from a distance to represent wider public and community interests, or the voluntary organizations on which so much depended.

Early in August came definite word that the expected grant would not be forthcoming, blocked, it was believed, at political centres of power. Without this substantial support through the W.I.B., the future of the program was thrown into uncertainty. But it was decided to go forward with the conference in the hope that a new source of funds could be found. And the response to its announcement was immediate and enthusiastic, in fact, almost overwhelming. At one point, it appeared that numbers were getting out of hand, and that it would be necessary to refuse further registrations. People wrote in for invitations, and they wrote in for invitations for friends. The Conference on Education for Reconstruction, September 10-12, opened with an attendance of 165 representing 120 organizations: people from the universities, the schools, the churches, libraries, government departments, the Women's Institutes, the Home and School Association, the Canadian Legion Educational Service, the Canadian Youth Commission, the YMCA, the YWCA, the SCM, the CIIA, the Canadian Congress of Labour, the NFB, the C.C.E.C., the W.I.B., the CBC, the CAAE, and others. The meeting was an outstanding event in the history of adult education and the CAAE. A full report was carried in the October, 1943 issue of the Association's journal, Food For Thought.

The CAAE Executive met at the conclusion of the founding conference to settle some practical matters. It was decided that the council to administer the program should be composed of 12 members, 3 from the CBC, 3 from the CIIA, 2 from labour, and one additional member, Dean H.G. Levesque of Laval University. Agreement to handle provincial organization in their respective provinces was announced by Professor K.W. Gordon of the University of Saskatchewan, Watson Thomson of Manitoba, and Donald Cameron of Alberta. It was agreed that the program should retain the name of the previous short series of reconstruction broadcasts, and be called: Of Things To Come: A Citizens' Forum. It was also reported that study materials were in the process of preparation. (Apparently, Jean Hunter Morrison, editor of Food For Thought, had gone forward with this work on the basis of the themes selected at the Macdonald College meeting the previous Christmas. The CIIA had not taken on this responsibility.)

The meeting closed with a frank facing of the difficulties of the job ahead.

EARLY EXPECTATIONS: FINANCIAL REALITIES

The "thinkers' conference" at Macdonald College had spent little time considering the means by which groups would actually be organized. Direct comment on the subject is confined to a five-line section (c) in a division of the Report of Proceedings under the heading Techniques. The assumption seems to have been that the program they were planning would be accepted as a tool for accomplishing an all-important social end, and that organizations of many kinds would seize it, and put it it work.

More attention to group organization was given in the two summer meetings of the committee to plan the founding conference. Rather surprisingly, Harry Avison expressed the view that group organization for the new program would take place within already existing bodies. Minutes quote him as hoping "that the response secured from the 100 delegates to the conference would result in the formation of groups within their membership". Other suggestions were that individual organizations might take responsibility for group formation within specific areas, that a series of regional conferences might stimulate group organization, and that councils might be formed in various communities to take action. All these proposals appear to suggest that voluntary organizations would become something like full partners with the Association in the program.

There can be no question that from the earliest days, voluntary organizations gave the program their enthusiastic blessing. They were convinced that Citizens' Forum would fill an important national need, and they were happy to have taken part in its launching. But, to expect their commitment to the practical task of organizing forums was surely unrealistic.

Voluntary associations have their own reasons for being, their own ends to pursue, and programs to operate. Only a small segment of the topics scheduled for a Citizens' Forum season could possibly fall

within any one organization's specific field of concern. The series, as a whole, might well appeal to its members as individuals, but, with its wide diversity of subject matter, much of the program was bound to fall outside its territory as an organization. It soon became clear that voluntary associations would not take on responsibility for the organization of ongoing Citizens' Forum groups - as a major activity - either within their own membership, or in the community at large. The same was true of the trade unions. The labour movement had expanded rapidly in wartime Canada. The chief concern of labour leaders was to increase their membership's awareness of union issues and objectives. Educational programs, within the unions, naturally concentrated, for the most part, on these bread-and-butter matters.

However, it must be said immediately that voluntary associations and unions made a substantial, and an increasing contribution over the years, to the program's functioning. And fortunately, Citizens' Forum soon had a ready means for encouraging and sustaining this cooperation. The Joint Planning Commission was a unique clearing-house mechanism, set up in 1947, and bringing together a wide range of voluntary organizations and government agencies in the broad field of adult education. Nearly a hundred agencies collaborated in this way for more than a decade. In meetings, three times a year, they exchanged information on current activities, and conferred on future plans. The Commission, at first under the direction of Roby Kidd, and later, of Clare Clark, while responding to, and serving this national function was for administrative purposes a standing committee of the CAAE, and had its headquarters under the same roof as Citizens' Forum. The latter program, in calling on the organizations for help, could make full use of the records gathered, and the contacts established, by the JPC, and readily avail itself of JPC staff advice.

The range of services performed by organizations, nationally, provincially, and locally, is revealed in the correspondence, reports, and memoranda, in the Citizens' Forum records. Many voluntary associations distributed the annual Citizens' Forum program folder widely

among their membership, in this way, building the audience for the broadcasts, and increasing the possibility of group formation. As well, they frequently called membership attention to individual programs of special interest, and to the series as a whole, in their own publicity, newsletters, and magazines. Several permitted the display of Citizens' Forum materials at their conferences, and often allowed time for a brief promotion of the project during actual conference sessions. Many organizations, large and small, across the country, helped to stimulate interest in the program in their communities through the sponsorship of broadcast meetings. They issued publicity, brought out the audience, and made certain the participants were prepared to respond during the question period. Frequently, they purchased block orders of study pamphlets for use in their own activities. And they contributed to the substance of the program as well. Each spring, they suggested discussion topics for the forthcoming season. Several gave valuable assistance in the preparation of study pamphlets by suggesting sources of information in their special field. They also offered valuable help in calling attention to useful and accessible materials for inclusion in the short reading list in the final section of each week's pamphlet. On a few occasions, organizations even supplied additional pamphlet material for distribution to groups as a supplement to the Citizens' Forum study bulletin.

For the broadcast on Probing Our Prejudices, March 19, 1946, the Canadian Jewish Congress provided a remarkable combination of services: it gave substantial assistance in the preparation of the study pamphlet, purchased a block order for specialized distribution, alerted membership to the forthcoming broadcast, prepared an analysis of forum opinion, and published a report of this analysis as an issue of its Information and Comment.

Nonetheless, the actual organizing of Citizens' Forum groups was not basic to the purpose of any one voluntary body. In this fact lay a fundamental difference between the CAAE's two forum projects. Farm Radio Forum was directed to a specific segment of the population, and

had its base in a way of life, and a means of livelihood. It had, as its third sponsor, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, a voluntary organization with a direct interest in the growth and increasing importance of the rural group movement. And the Federation functioned effectively as the national, provincial, and the local level. Citizens' Forum had no counterpart to this built-in voluntary assistance. The Federal and Provincial Departments of Agriculture also had a considerable stake in the successful operation of the older project. And the local "ag. rep." could be an extremely helpful person on the home front. Later on, the Cooperative Union of Canada joined in the sponsorship. Citizens' Forum could command no such special attention from any organization or department of government. Its interests were too diffuse.

Was it realized the extent to which, in the absence of such practical support, Citizens' Forum must depend on the provision of adequate staff? Correspondence at the time, and the minutes of early planning sessions, produce contradictory evidence. Dr. Corbett, and others, point out that the new project will need the direction of an experienced adult educator, and that a corps of field workers will be an essential component of such an undertaking. But, on the other hand, on at least one occasion, he suggested that the program could be carried on simply through the appointment of an additional staff member in the Farm Forum office. There appears to have been a high degree of ambivalence on the subject. In its decision to move forward on the program without the expected government grant, or the anticipated cooperation of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, it may be that the CAAE did not fully face the financial realities involved in the operation of an urban project of this kind.

Governments, institutions, and the society as a whole, at that time, gave the adult education movement extremely limited support. Programs for adults carried on outside the recognized institutions were mostly shoestring operations. And, to a certain extent, the situation was accepted. Perhaps too readily. Looking back at the development of Citizens' Forum, it is necessary to realize the severe financial restrictions

under which the Association was forced to function. The courses adopted, and the decisions taken, in developing the program were frequently less the product of a considered judgment than of a plain lack of cash. This stringency affected the project in fundamental ways.

George Grant (later, Professor at McMaster University), appointed as national secretary for the first season (1943-1944) was conscious, in fact, greatly over-conscious, of his lack of experience. Added to this, he shared with Jean Morrison responsibility for the production of the study material to accompany the broadcasts. This was an extremely heavy additional chore, and a most difficult one to combine with the major task of promoting the new program across Canada. A grant from the Canadian Council on Education for Citizenship made it possible in the second year to add a new staff member, Isabel Wilson, to handle the study pamphlets. George Grant was thus a full-time national secretary in his second term. Although he did visit all provinces briefly, it is clear that lack of travel funds kept him close to the home base a large part of the time.

The two succeeding secretaries, Dr. Martyn Estall, on leave from the Department of Philosophy at Queen's University, and Robert McKenzie, each had wider responsibilities within the Association, and each acted as chairman for several Citizens' Forum broadcasts. Douglas Clark (1947-1948), formerly on the staff of the Extension Department at UBC, was the first national secretary (and only for one year) able to spend his full time on the building and promoting of the program, to travel fairly widely, to visit some communities, and to make personal contact with Forum organizations in their various provinces.

This situation never recurred. The sudden illness of the newly-appointed national secretary in the opening weeks of the following season, forced his immediate resignation. The decision made in that emergency was to combine the function of the national secretary with that of the publications secretary. The preparation of the study material would be placed in the hands of outside writers. This was

seen as a temporary measure. In the event, it became the permanent administrative arrangement.

The immediate effect of the move on the structure of Citizens' Forum was, of course, to cut the tiny staff at national office in half. The fusion of the two jobs meant that the activities of the national secretary must now be adjusted to the demands of the weekly press deadline, since the new policy could, by no means, relieve the national office of the responsibilities of pamphlet production. From this time on, national office contact with forum organization across the country had to be carried on almost entirely by mail, and by means of the annual conference.

Whatever the original assumptions, no funds were made available for the engaging of field workers. George Grant saw this lack as crucial, even at a time when the group project was still a novelty, and attracting much public attention. At the end of his second term as national secretary, with 800 registered groups, he contended that the program could not survive without the support of active work in the field. He pointed out that no matter how energetic and imaginative the provincial secretary might be in promoting the Forum, if he or she worked as a volunteer, it must be under severe limitations of time, money, or both, and, if, as a staff member of the extension department of a provincial university, or a provincial department of education, probably with little chance to make direct contacts in the community outside headquarters. All secretaries, however situated, had, of course, the weekly task of receiving and analyzing provincial group opinion, of preparing a written report, and delivering it on broadcast night.

George Grant, and many others, were convinced that for sustained life, the program would require the services of field staff with the time and financial backing to move freely into communities to stimulate interest in group formation by direct personal contact with key people in schools, churches, libraries, in voluntary organizations, in a wide range of existing activities, and, perhaps especially,

within the growing community council, and community centre movements. These workers could also offer practical help in demonstrating group discussion methods, and in advising beginning forums. Even one, or two, such people in a province could make all the difference. It was recalled that, in some provinces, Farm Radio Forum made it a rule that a trained worker be present at the first meeting of every new group.

For a three-month period in the autumn of 1949, the CAAE found funds for the engagement of Mrs. Mary Baty to do an experimental field job in Ontario. She worked in cooperation with the Community Programmes Branch of the Department of Education, then Citizens' Forum's provincial sponsor in that province. On the basis of an extensive mail and publicity campaign, she concentrated direct personal effort on four centres: Orillia, Belleville, Brantford, and London, and there were excellent results in each, even after work lasting only a few weeks. It was the general view of those close to the situation that this experiment was an all-too-brief demonstration of a process that should have been a continuing one.

It is extremely difficult to make categorical statements concerning the value of field work. But, two instances may be advanced. The University of British Columbia carried a program for some time called Living Room Learning, with the support of a grant from the Fund for Adult Education in the United States. While there was money for intensive field work the program flourished. But, when this was no longer the case, the project did not successfully survive the withdrawal of direct contact between organizer and prospective member. Again, although Farm Radio Forum organized many more groups in Ontario and the Maritimes than did Citizens' Forum, in some western provinces, where the agricultural interests provided much less active neighbourhood support for the rural project, the two Forums achieved almost equal results.

It was understood that policy for the program would take shape at the Citizens' Forum annual conference, held almost always at the same

time and place as the CAAE's yearly national meeting. At first, these were relatively large, open gatherings, frequently including outside speakers, and given over, at least in part, to a broad examination of the adult education scene. After the early years, however, CF conferences developed into smaller working sessions, concentrating on plans for the coming broadcast season. It was assumed that all provincial offices would be represented at these meetings, preferably by the actual provincial secretary, or if not, by someone close to the provincial organization. The snag, however, was that no fund existed to support the travel costs of those expected to attend. They must look to their own employing organization to defray their expenses. The result was that the ability of a secretary to take part in the conference might depend on such extraneous matters as his or her staff seniority, the chance location of the conference, the financial situation of the provincial sponsoring body, or to the degree of its commitment to the CF project.

Almost inevitably, representation was uneven from the viewpoint of geography. Provinces distant from the conference location might decide that it was simply too costly to send any special CF delegation, while the conference centre itself, and neighbouring regions might well be over-represented. As the CF meeting moved from one part of the country to another, its makeup altered greatly from year to year, and often so did its basic approach to the program. As an example: at the meeting in Winnipeg in the spring of 1945, the emphasis was on early topic selection, sound preparation, and cooperation with other agencies, such as the National Film Board, in the development of the program. (It was at this CAAE conference that plans were laid for the forming of the Joint Planning Commission, designed to bring organizations together to learn about each other, and how to use, assist, and promote, each other's activities.) A year later, in Kingston, there was vigorous support for a program stress on the hotly controversial topic decided upon as close as possible to broadcast date. Had it been possible to assure the presence of a solid core of active Citizens' Forum people - perhaps, two from each province, the provincial secretary, and a representative from the local forum organization - at planning sessions, such abrupt shifting of gears might have been avoided.

Certainly, conventional boards and committees can become bogged down in procedural detail, in all the complications of the amendment to the amendment. But it can be argued that the Citizens' Forum conference was too casual in its operation, and possessed too little formal structure for a policy-making body. There was nearly always a warm and spirited exchange of information, ideas, experience, and opinions, But, at critical points, the meeting could fail to set a firm course of action, to provide a clear direction to the national office in carrying on the project. The lack of a definite, recorded decision on some point in question could lead to a sudden change in policy, or simply, to drift. Perhaps, the weaknesses in relying on the conference for direction of policy were most apparent in the spring of 1948, when new plans for the program came up for discussion, and again in the spring of 1955, prior to the move into television.

GROUP ORGANIZATION: REACTIONS AND PARTICIPATION

Citizens' Forum came into being before the sophisticated study of "the group" had begun at institutions such as the Training Laboratory in Group Development at Bethel, Maine, and before terms such as "group dynamics" were familiar ones in the adult education world. The focus of the program was not on interrelations within the group, or the effect of the group on the individual, or of the individual on the group, nor was it concerned with therapy, or the personal by-products of group membership. Interest lay in the substance of, and social action following, the discussion, and not in group process. The orginators of Citizens' Forum saw the program as, broadly speaking, "education for citizenship". Its role was to supply a background of information and present conflicting viewpoints on the critical questions of the day. It would be judged on its success in providing a basis for people to meet, examine the issues, share their opinions, and reach conclusions on the best course for public action. CAAE pamphlet publications for use in the program, How Good Is Your Forum? and Let's Talk It Over, offered practical, straightforward "old-school" advice on the running of group discussion, and so did the journal Food For Thought in its articles under the heading, Leadership Guidance. Provincial materials issued for groups followed the same general lines.

Those working in the project had little difficulty maintaining contact with the forums concerning group opinion of the program in its various aspects. Groups sent in a good deal of unsolicited comment with their weekly reports. And provincial secretaries quite frequently requested group reaction on specific matters. Forum views were passed along to national office in correspondence, and at annual Forum conferences. From the spring of 1948 on, the yearly Citizens' Forum questionnaire gave groups an organized means of making their opinions known. A flow of highly varied comment came in on individual broadcasts, and on the series as a whole, a nearly even balance of

praise and blame on the subject of audience participation, fair acceptance of the content of the pamphlets, but frequent pleas for earlier distribution, much regional complaint concerning the hour of broadcast - too early or too late - open rebellion at the scheduling of the program for Friday evening one year, and often, sharp disapproval of the discussion questions.

But, by far, the most continued and widespread criticism throughout the life of the program centered on the placing of the five-minute provincial opinion report at the conclusion of the national broadcast. Groups argued that a report of opinion on the previous week's discussion at the moment when the forum should be settling in to tackle that evening's new topic could be highly disruptive. Groups could be easily sidetracked into rehearsing week-old arguments when they should have been concentrating on new. The national office was urged to persuade the CBC to commence the program with the provincial opinion report, and thus, avoid the break in continuity. From the group viewpoint, the objection was a valid one. But petition for this change had no hope of success. No CBC program organizer could possibly agree to opening a national broadcast with a five-minute period of interest to only a small section of the listening audience. The placing of the provincial news remained an unresolved issue.

Unfortunately, much less information was available to provincial organizers on the functioning of the groups than on their opinions of the program. If a forum registered, reported once or twice, fell silent, and apparently ceased to exist, provincial offices often had little means of knowing whether the difficulty lay in dissatisfaction with the program. or with the group experience. Establishing contact to learn how a group worked, how it planned its meetings, what discussion patterns it followed, what frustrations it met, could present an almost insurmountable problem.

Mary Baty, in her work in Ontario, rediscovered all the typical discussion group difficulties, and a few new ones:

.Inadequate reporting back to the provincial office. Sometimes, the secretary coloured the reports to reaffirm her/his own views.

.Difficulty in achieving just the right atmosphere. "We had trouble getting the right amount of informality for good discussion, and yet, not make it a social group only. One time, we met in a school, and the meetings were poor because the frigidity of the atmosphere meant that some never opened their mouths. Then, we had meetings in homes, and they became a competition among the women to see who could make the best lunches".

.Some group members use the Forum to proselytize, and those of opposing points of view do not wish to join the group.

.After a number of discussion meetings, it is too easy to predict the attitudes of group members. "It becomes boring".

.Difficulty of securing skilled discussion leaders. "A poor leader can kill a group - and often does".

There can be no question that the Quebec office was in personal touch with a larger number of its groups than any other province. Forums were mostly concentrated in Montreal, and its suburbs, and the enterprise, from the start, was a cohesive one. Margaret Howes, secretary for the first four years, working as a volunteer with strong, enthusiastic committees, organized a succession of activities that brought group members together. Large, sometimes quite elaborate, conferences were held at the opening and the conclusion of the broadcast season. These meetings discussed the program's purpose and aims, the means of promoting the Forum idea, and increasing the number of groups, and, of course, the problems of provincial structure and finance. But, mid-season meetings were also called at which group leaders engaged in a practical clinic on discussion methods, and in frank talk about successes and failures. The Quebec organization benefitted from its close association with Macdonald College. Staff members arranged demonstrations of group discussion at conferences

and provided some comment on the theory behind the methods used. Stella Kinsella took over as provincial secretary for the forums when Margaret Howes left for other work but by th arly 1950's it became increasingly difficult to operate without institutional support. Strenuous efforts were made over several seasons to gain organizational sponsorship from McGill University, and from Sir George Williams College. These were unsuccessful, and the project remained a voluntary one from first to last. An arrangement was reached whereby the CAAE made itself responsible for the provincial mailing.

In her first two years working on a voluntary basis with the Ontario Citizens' Forum Council, Harriett Carr undertook a remarkable number of field trips considering the financial limitations of the operation. She was successful in building regional councils across the province, as well as local councils in London, Hamilton, Toronto, and Ottawa. She organized a mid-winter meeting of group leaders in Toronto in the first Citizens' Forum season, and an Eastern regional conference held in Ottawa in April, 1945, brought many Forum members and supporters together at the end of the second year on the air. In June, 1945, Miss Carr became the first staff member appointed to the new University Adult Education Board (later the Community Programmes Branch), and Citizens' Forum thus gained a provincial sponsor. In the new situation, she was able to continue making fairly frequent visits throughout the province, though she was not a "field worker" in the accepted sense, with a car and travel budget. A major event in September, 1947, was a Friday to Sunday provincial conference held in Sherwood Forest Camp in the Haliburton country. Mrs. Mollie Elliot, who followed Harriet Carr as secretary in Ontario, maintained a vigorous and successful organizational effort, although she appeared to have less freedom of movement outside the Toronto headquarters.

In the autumn of 1953, the Ontario Community Programmes Branch withdrew from the program, and the Department of Extension of Queen's University, Kingston, assumed the official sponsorship, with Kathleen Healey of the Department as the new secretary. She and Lois Ross were

successful in making new contacts and organizing new groups. But the changeover had come at an awkward time, just before the substantial reduction in group services, and fundamental changes in the national program.

The "fragile" nature of provincial sponsorship in the Maritimes was of concern to a succession of national secretaries. The Department of Education in Nova Scotia gave the program provincial support to the extent of granting Citizens' Forum office space at the Normal School at Truro, and supplying the services of a member of staff to handle routine office duties. Marion Gilroy, with the province's regional library service, Don Crowdis, of the Provincial Museum in Halifax, and others, took on the promotional part of the job, giving a great deal of their free time to building interest in the Forum idea, and organizing groups. Appeals were made at the highest political level for a greater commitment of time and money to the project. The Division of Adult Education, under the direction of Guy Henson, was most sympathetic to Citizens' Forum, and gave it what help it could on an unofficial basis. It put a part-time worker at the disposal of the program for one season, and in 1948, arranged for Clifford Dunphy, on the staff of the Normal School, to take over the provincial organization as "an agent of the Department". Douglas Rodwell, of the Institute of Public Affairs of Dalhousie University, followed him. At no time, however, was Citizens' Forum a major occupation for anyone, whether as a volunteer, or in the service of a sponsoring body.

In New Brunswick, the Department of Education also gave the program official support, but this appears to have been little more, at least in early days, than the provision of a mailing address. Marion Purdy, who held a full-time staff position in the Department of Education at Fredericton, was the first provincial secretary. It would seem that she handled Citizens' Forum in the first year almost entirely as an additional activity in her own time. The Minister of Education was approached with an urgent request to place the project on a firmer base. But this appears to have produced little action. In 1948, the program

did secure a more solid status in the appointment of K.C. Bishop, of the Teachers' College in Fredericton, as provincial secretary. Josephine Lynam, also on the staff of the College, succeeded him. It would not appear that arrangements in New Brunswick, from first to last, provided any real opportunity for active organizational work at large in the community. (As Jo Lynam put it at the Citizens' Forum conference in Kingston in 1956, "There is simply no staff time to promote groups".)

It was very early decided not to proceed with organizing Citizens' Forum in Prince Edward Island. Farm Radio Forum was already operating successfully there, and it seemed inadvisable to try to maintain two discussion projects.

On its entry into confederation, Newfoundland became a part of Citizens' Forum, with the support of the Adult Education Division of the Department of Education, and with Dr. Florence O'Neil as provincial secretary. Energetic efforts to promote the program with organizations, and interests, around the province faced formidable practical difficulties. Mail delivery service was so unreliable outside St. John's for much of the broadcast season that, many times, study pamphlets could not be distributed in time for use by the groups. This physical obstacle, plus the delay in appointing a staff member for promotional work, prevented a large-scale development of the program. Citizens' Forum groups were enthusiastic, but few.

The University of Manitoba was the program's sponsor in that province from the inception of Citizens' Forum. Its Adult Education office, however, closed during the summer months. This meant that the provincial secretary worked on a part-time basis, and there could be little continuity in the operation. A succession of people, Stanley Rands, Tanis Murray, and Mary Bishop, held the post in the first years, briefly, but with much enthusiasm. Others followed for short periods, and the impression of constant change is heightened by the fact that Barbara Chipman became Barbara Kilvert, and Dorothy Swancar became Dorothy Greenwood. (It was the view in Toronto at one time that the office must be running a matrimonial bureau.) When the

Department of University Extension and Adult Education was created, under Stuart Tweedie in 1949, subsequent secretaries - Mary Elizabeth Flanders, Enid Perry, J.E. Foster, George Boyes, Harold Huston, and Lilian McJannet - enjoyed a much firmer base for action.

Citizens' Forum in the other three Western provinces had, from the start, the support of established university extension departments. K.W. Gordon, the longest-lasting secretary in Forum history, served in Saskatchewan from the program's first season on the air until the mid-1950's, when he was succeeded by Arthur Wirick. In Alberta, Frank Peers, Stuart Tweedie, Duncan Campbell, and George Potter, carried Citizens' Forum organization for varying lengths of time. Marjorie Smith, in British Columbia, was secretary over a number of years, and again, several others held the post - Kelvin Large, Bob Boroughs, Geoffrey Hearn, and Philip Keatley.

There is no question that extension departments gave Citizens' Forum secretaries the advantage of adequate office resources to undertake extensive promotion campaigns, and to provide efficient group services. And it was possible for them to advance the interests of the Forum within a range of other departmental activities. Opportunities to speak at conferences and seminars were likely to come their way. Most important, their departments had already-established relationships with organizations at the provincial and local levels where the programs of national associations take shape. Nevertheless, all secretaries held desk jobs with other, sometimes heavy, departmental responsibilities, which gave them limited opportunity to move about the province outside their central location.

Both the amount and quality of provincial support for Citizens' Forum varied greatly from province to province, and within provinces, from one period to another. But nowhere, no matter how dedicated the provincial secretary, nor how cooperative the provincial sponsor, was there anything approaching the continuous field work that George Grant, and others in early years, considered indispensable. Something reasonably close to it might have been achieved in Saskatchewan

had it been possible for the Extension Department of the University in Saskatoon, and the Adult Education Division of the Department of Education in Regina, to work in wholehearted collaboration. Attempts were made to unite their efforts in a joint council, but most did not succeed. The first example of effective cooperation between the two was set in motion when Murray Thomson's offer from Regina of the services of Mrs. Amy Dalgleish for eight weeks of field work in major Saskatchewan centres was gladly accepted in Saskatoon. It happened in the winter of 1955, and it is unfortunate that this unanimity was achieved so close to the radical changes in the program introduced by the entry into television.

(No claims are made for either the completeness, or the accuracy, of the attempt to name provincial secretaries, and to comment on their activities. Complete data from the provinces was never collected, and is not found in the national archive of Citizens' Forum. It has been necessary for the author to rely on memory, and on the sometimes sparse materials in the Citizens' Forum national files. Evidence does not exist to date the comings and goings of secretaries with any certainty. This is partly because the minutes of Citizens' Forum conferences are sometimes of little help, and can be misleading, since not the actual secretary, but another staff member of the sponsoring body, often gave the provincial report to the meeting. Apologies are tendered for all omissions and errors.)

The chief resource for the promotion of group formation, in addition to the CAAE journal, Food For Thought, was the yearly CBC program folder, listing the broadcast topics, dates, times, stations carrying the program, and provincial offices, and providing some brief outline of the project. These folders were shipped from a press in Toronto in very large quantities to offices across the country. Extension departments, for instance, might place an order for any number between 10 and 25 thousand. The time of the shipment's arrival was important. It was a serious handicap if it failed to appear in time for the first heavy departmental fall mailing. On her visits throughout Ontario, Mary Baty heard much complaint about lateness in

receiving the Forum program. She was told by several organizations that it should be in hand early in September if they were to include the use of the series, or any part of it, in their own activities. Most provincial offices were well aware of this, and prepared mimeographed announcements, in advance, sometimes quite attractive ones in colour, for a limited mailing. Resolutions were made at headquarters in Toronto each year to achieve a final topics list in time to make early printing possible. But, this was hard to do. A catastrophic world event, an unexpected political change on the home front, indecision about wording, delays at the press, or in shipping, could cause delay. In many provinces, the folder would be included in a wide range of general mail throughout the year. Most sent it out in large quantities to a number of organizations for distribution among their membership. And it would be used to accompany promotional material prepared for selected groups.

Each provincial office drew up its own report form. The national office did not see the returned forms, and was usually made aware of group opinion through the secretary's report broadcast script each week.

At the opening of the season, provinces sent in their orders for the first set of study pamphlets. Numbers would be adjusted during the year as registrations grew or decreased. Pamphlets were shipped in bulk directly from the CAAE's press to provincial offices and mailed from there to groups and individual subscribers. Provinces set their own prices and handled their own financial transactions.

Groups developed in many different settings, in addition to homes. School classes used Citizens' Forum, listening to the broadcasts at home in the evening, making notes, and holding discussions later in the week in a current events period. School groups were popular in several provinces, especially, perhaps, in Nova Scotia, where a member of the staff of that province's Division of Adult Education even suggested some changes that might be made in broadcast style to render the programs better adapted to school use. Mary Baty

reported that Ottawa social studies teachers made extensive use of the Forum, but under a different plan. The class would go to an individual student's home, where the host would act as chairman of an informal discussion following the broadcast. In the classroom next day, a panel of students would rediscuss the question and all would engage in a further examination of it.

Some churches found the Forum effective as a special activity for an already existing group. But the ministry of Glebe Road United Church in Toronto sent in an extensive account of a highly successful forum organized there in early years "for people of other or no church affiliation".

The national office carried on an intensive and profitable campaign to secure subscriptions to the Citizens' Forum pamphlets from public libraries across the country. The hope was also to interest them in building a special library activity around the CF broadcast. This was accomplished in some places, notably in the new public library in London, Ontario, which, in its role as a community centre, was the setting for a highly diverse range of programs. During his time as national secretary (1947), Douglas Clark was able to obtain a small grant from a private source to assist in organizing forums among such long-term patients as those in tuberculosis hospitals. This was a fairly active project for a couple of following seasons. A full account of the forum at Toronto's "Weston San" was carried in Food For Thought, in April, 1949. One of the liveliest groups was located at Stony Mountain Penitentiary.

The number of these special groups in relation to the total number of forums is now impossible to estimate. Without any doubt, however, the great majority of groups consisted of neighbours, friends or colleagues - perhaps, a combination of all three - or of people who met through common membership in some organization, special interest, or endeavor. It is also impossible to be firmly statistical about total numbers. George Grant reported 1,215 groups in his statement to the CAAE Executive at the conclusion of the first season on the air.

And he quoted a figure of 800 in his second term. The best evidence would show that there was a fairly gradual decline in group numbers after the first seasons, levelling off in the late 1940's and early 1950's at around the 400 mark. A major difficulty, of course, in reaching a precise figure lay in the definition of "a group". Do you recognize a group if it does not report regularly, perhaps reports only at intervals, perhaps, not at all after the early weeks? What if it registered, continued to take the study material, and was never heard from? There was a certain amount of sensitivity among provincial offices on the subject, particularly after the "informal group" and the "family group" were supposedly given recognition. Would these groups be counted? Practice among provincial offices was not uniform.

Part of the uncertainty about numbers had its roots in the widely different nature of the individual forums. Some groups were greatly caught up in the provincial weekly news broadcast. For them, it was the high point of the evening to hear their group's name mentioned, and their opinions quoted on the air. They liked a chatty script with general news of forum doings. If, for any reason, the provincial report was omitted, they wrote irate letters to their secretary. Clearly, for others, the recording of their answers to a set of discussion questions was of completely secondary concern, and they felt little interest in an account of provincial views. The discussion itself was all that mattered. Many observers believe that quite large numbers of people continued to meet around the Citizens' Forum broadcasts who did not want to bother with the reporting process at all. Later, audience mail appeared to give this some confirmation.

Much discussion centered on the whole matter of reporting, particularly after the decline in group numbers. Might there not be something a bit phony about making such a point of group reporting if no practical use was made of the resulting body of opinion? Harry Dunn, a most active group member in Manitoba, argued that if Forum opinion could be seen to serve some purpose, to carry some weight, more groups would report regularly, and more people might take the step

of joining the action. And a group in New Brunswick took Mr. Bishop severely to task in November, 1951, because Forum opinion was not being put to effective use in influencing government. Douglas Clark had made some real effort in that direction. He drew up a quite detailed report of forum views on three topics during his time, and sent them to the appropriate federal cabinet minister: Is Our Immigration Policy Satisfactory?, to James A. Glen, Minister of Mines and Resources (responsible for immigration); How Is Canadian External Policy Made?, to Louis St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs; and What Kind Of Labour Legislation Do We Need?, to Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour. But the problem was a circular one. Citizens' Forum group opinion would be of little or no consequence to government departments and agencies, or to specialized interests in the community, unless there was already a very large volume of it.

The question of group action and its relation to group discussion comes up later in another context. But, Citizens' Forum did not make a habit of encouraging groups to organize "action projects", as did Farm Radio Forum, since the interests of members were so varied and the subject matter discussed in the program so diverse. Rather, experience in Citizens' Forum more usually led to a heightened interest in affairs generally, and to a greater readiness to become involved in a range of community activities. Many Citizens' Forum members were already a force on the local scene, and belonged to other groups through which they took action.

But, perhaps, it should be repeated that forums were very different in character. After six years of existence, one Montreal group sent in an account of its operation that was printed in Food For Thought in January, 1949. Among other things, we were told, "...in fact, as a group, we haven't done a thing about anything. We have never undertaken an action project, never signed a petition, never drawn up a resolution. But, we've had a wonderful time - just talking". In fact, this group contained a score of people who were continuously engaged in educational, social, and political projects, through other organizations.

Two very early Citizens' Forum action projects, however, had specific and long-lasting results, and are of some special interest. At a conference held in Halifax in December, 1950, bringing together Citizens' Forum group members, and some of the original supporters of the project in the region, Guy Henson recalled that the new library building, then in process of construction in the city, was the end result of a strenuous Forum campaign. In June, 1944, following the program's first season on the air, the Toronto Citizens' Forum organized a Conference on Housing. A resolution passed at the conference brought into being the Citizens' Housing Association, which later became the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association. The insistent demands of this organization for low income housing led to the rebuilding of Toronto's Regent Park area. Thus, Citizens' Forum can claim some part in the founding of the public housing movement in Canada. One hears of other such processes elsewhere in Canada that were never documented.

Mention has been made several times of the short-lived experiment involving Mary Baty because in a single three-month span, her full-time efforts resulted, not only in substantial numbers of additional listeners, and several new groups, but in three significant community action projects.

Even a small field staff, it seems certain, would have resulted in a record substantially augmented in total audience, in group numbers, and in results in social action. Those viewing Citizens' Forum from the perspective of late years when money for organization in the community was available have often failed to see that results were obtained almost without organizational support, and that failings were almost inevitable. Citizens' Forum had its enemies, people in high places who were not in favour of public discussion of contentious issues, but it was never destroyed by such opponents. The chief enemy was attrition that resulted from lack of basic support.

BROADCASTS

Most successful, long-running radio and television programs in the broad field of public affairs develop a recognizable style. This may be because they bear the mark of a single dominating personality, of a core of regular participants, or of a strong, unified production team. Or, perhaps, of all three. No matter how the subject matter may change from week to week, a prevailing attitude, a unique approach to topic treatment, give the program a permanent cast. The program builds its audience on public response to a known product.

The Citizens' Forum broadcast lacked the required ingredients to build an audience on the basis of an established program style. It is true that the novelist, Morley Callaghan, the permanent chairman for the first two seasons of scripted broadcasts, was recognized as a "personality", and, to a degree, put his stamp on the early program. But after this early period, not until the late years - and then, under very different circumstances - did Citizens' Forum have continuity of chairmanship. Martyn Estall (1945-46) and Robert McKenzie (1946-47) both served frequently in that capacity during their time at the CAAE as the project's national secretary. Neil Morrison and Frank Peers, both as assistant supervisor and supervisor of the CBC Talks Department, served as chairman many times. Quite frequently, however, the chairman was drawn from the community in which the broadcast originated, and probably filled the role on only one occasion during an entire season. In any event, no matter how often he might serve, he was not a participating chairman, a "performer" in his own right. Quite by design, there was no J.B. McGeachy, Nathan Cohen, Patrick Watson, or William S. Buckley. (Indeed, the correspondence makes it clear that George Grant was at times greatly disturbed by what he saw as Morley Callaghan's unwarranted intrusion into the discussion - "however charming a person he may be".) Nor did Citizens' Forum build up a corps of permanent panelists, with known attitudes, and accepted idiosyncrasies. That was, of course, out of the question since it was central to the

program's purpose that it should originate in various parts of the country, and give expression to regional viewpoints. With no fixed production centre, and in the absence of a production team assigned specifically to it, the program was put on the air by CBC Talks producers from Halifax to Vancouver, and naturally, it bore the marks of their several approaches.

The character of the broadcast depended almost entirely on the nature of the particular group gathered at any one time before the microphones. For this reason, Citizens' Forum could be an absolutely different program from week to week. It could be mild or abrasive, restrained or explosive, hotly argumentative or quietly reflective. The great, unanswered question was: What should it be?

Until well into the 1950's, it was the understanding that the broadcasts were organized as a basis for discussion in small groups. They were intended to serve the interests of the forums rather than reflect the taste and preferences of planners and producers. It is important to realize the extent to which this view was accepted by both the "broadcasters" and the "adult educators" involved. The fact is that no real division existed between the interests of the two. Most of those directly involved with the supervision of the program at CBC - Neil Morrison, Frank Peers, Tanis Murray, Arthur Stinson, Christina McDougall - had had experience in the field of adult education and were committed to the group aspect of the project.

The groups considered that the Citizens' Forum program belonged to them. And they expected to be consulted concerning it. They were, and to a surprising degree. Provincial secretaries across the country regularly sought the views of their groups on the weekly broadcasts and frequently passed this opinion on to the national office at CAAE, and sometimes directly to the CBC. From 1948 on, group opinion on the broadcasts was assembled through the annual questionnaire, and reported in detail. And group reaction was brought forward and discussed at length at the Citizens' Forum conference each spring.

The difficulty was that over the years, no consensus developed concerning the desired product. Sharp conflict of opinion on both style and content remained all too apparent. This can be clearly seen in the group comments on the 1945-46 season collected by Harriett Carr of Ontario, and on the autumn series of that year by Margaret Howes of Quebec.

A continuing point at issue was the extent to which the broadcast should highlight the controversy involved in a topic. Debate, of course - but how sharp? Not only was there no agreement on the general question, but violently opposing views were held concerning the element of conflict in individual programs. Complaints about confusion, interruption, disorder, or a lack of control by the chairman would be lodged against the very broadcast that others found lively, vigorous, provocative, and stimulating to discussion. A firm conclusion on what "the majority" really wanted was impossible to reach. But, clearly, many groups preferred a logical, sustained, fairly low-key treatment of the subject. A surprising number, however, carried their preference for an "orderly, well-planned coverage" to the point of considering verbal fireworks of any kind a waste of time. A few groups even appeared to see "rudeness" in any sharp exchange or clash of opinion. They wanted, they said, an "explanation" of the issues, and not a "dog fight" over them on the air. An extreme view was that the broadcast should follow the structure of the pamphlet, concentrating discussion on the questions raised therein. These groups seemed to have in mind something like a teaching session, with the pamphlets as a small basic textbook. Apparently they did not see the broadcasts, and the printed study material, as having separate functions.

But there was something approaching agreement on one point. In spite of differences concerning controversy in general, group members did join in quite wide disapproval of the intrusion of party politics into the broadcasts. The feeling seemed to be that this ran counter to the program's purposes. The introduction of party positions, as such, was sharply questioned, even when conflicting

opinion on a specific issue had obviously formed along party lines. Citizens' Forum organized a series of formal TV debates in the autumn of both 1961 and 1962. Tension was high across the country, and these were clearly announced as political broadcasts featuring party spokesmen. Even so, there was a good deal of objection from some of the continuing groups to the "political nature" of the programs.

This absence of direction was disturbing. Evidently, the project's founding fathers had expected that the groups would offer fairly clear guidance to program planners and that something approaching a generally accepted broadcast style would develop. Certainly, Harry Avison, in writing to Margaret Howes in early days, expressed astonishment and some annoyance at the conflicting responses of Quebec forums to specific broadcasts. And as clearly, Neil Morrison of the CBC, found the contradictory nature of group comment hard to bear. But, wide divergence of opinion continued. The groups provided extremely valuable comments, criticisms, and suggestions, concerning the program on the air. But, from first to last, some liked it hot, and some liked it at least cool.

Comment from the outside tended to take a more consistent line. Critics, newspaper columnists, radio commentators, and academics, often voiced the opinion that Citizens' Forum was too cautious. They complained that there was too much hedging and too little straight talk. For them, controversy was not nearly vigorous enough. But the Canadian Forum went further than most in its criticism of the broadcast on How Should Our Children Be Taught About Sex?, in November of 1949:

> Confronted by the appalling monster of sex, having actually to talk out loud about it, not only before all those people, but before those dreadful open microphones, the members of the forum gave tongue to more epoch-making nothings than I have ever heard on a supposedly adult program.

There would seem to be some grounds for concluding that Canadians, in general, are less forthright in discussion and debate on the air

than either the British or the Americans and that, on the whole, Citizens' Forum reflected this national characteristic. Certainly, the program rarely found marked outspokenness among people involved in government, or those with widely-recognized party affiliations, if the discussion touched on a matter of current concern, or, perhaps, embarrassment to their party.

Robert McKenzie, who had just finished a tour of duty across the country as Citizens' Forum chairman, made this point in a letter of April, 1947, to Professor Gordon of Saskatchewan. "Canadians of any public stature are, to a surprising degree, reluctant to indulge in intellectual free-for-all discussion on the national network". He was writing in answer to the charge of a listener, forwarded to him by Professor Gordon, that CBC deliberately tried to play down contention, and sought to "tame speakers" who were too belligerent on programs like Citizens' Forum. Robert McKenzie was pointing out that the exact opposite was more frequently the case. Although there were a few occasions when the program exploded out of the chairman's control into an angry shouting match, if CBC producers had had their way, they would much oftener have sharpened the debate than moderated it.

By the conclusion of his year as national secretary, Robert McKenzie was convinced that the program must be more flexible. Events in the past two seasons - the first use of the atomic bomb, the end of the war in the Pacific, the Igor Gouzenko spy case, in its repercussions and aftermath, to name a few - had all occurred long after final program decisions had been made. All had necessitated disturbing shifts in the broadcast schedule. A way should be found to permit the program to deal with unforeseen situations. He believed, too, that Citizens' Forum needed some infusion of showmanship.

On both subjects, Robert McKenzie brought forward an interesting proposal to the Citizens' Forum conference in Toronto in May. The

plan was deliberately designed to produce two different styles of broadcast. He suggested that the program carry a Fixed Topic series and an Ad Hoc series on alternate broadcast evenings. Topics for the Fixed series would be determined early in the summer, and pamphlets prepared well in advance. The broadcast would present a straightforward coverage of the relevant material, with emphasis on explanation, and not on conflict. The aim would be to provide a sound basis for group discussion. For the Ad Hoc series, topics would be chosen close to broadcast date, to allow for newsbreaks, and no attempt would be made to issue study material. These broadcasts would be produced in Toronto, and would be staged at public meetings. Every effort would be made to secure outstanding political figures, and people prominent in the news as speakers. Occasionally, programs would be organized abroad in order to obtain direct contact with important happenings overseas. The intention would be to produce a considerable clash of opinion and personality, a lively and provocative argument rather than an orderly coverage of the topic. Though groups might meet around these programs, broadcasts would not be prepared with the existing forums predominantly in mind.

The McKenzie proposal met with only limited acceptance. The Ad Hoc idea was partly approved in the decision to leave every fourth broadcast in the series without a scheduled topic. These open periods would allow the program to deal with unanticipated events and emerging issues. No pamphlets would be prepared for these IN THE NEWS programs. But the idea of deliberately producing two kinds of broadcasts - to meet different needs and listener preferences - was not taken up. There was no decision to plan any marked distinction between the unscheduled discussions and the regular programs. There appeared to be an unwillingness to make a conscious effort to create a specific style of broadcast.

There was, however, some planned variation in broadcast format, even through the years of purely radio production. Commencing with the 1947-48 series, the program was lengthened to 45 minutes, and the

broadcasts, brought from public meetings in communities across the country, carried a final period of audience questions from the floor. There can be little doubt that the broadcast meetings did much to promote the Forum. But, whether or not audience participation added to the impact of the broadcast itself on the listener outside the hall remained an open question to the last. That sometimes it did, and sometimes it did not, is probably the most accurate answer. If a discussion were a particularly lively one, the question period might come as an unwelcome interruption, a break in the development of the argument, with a consequent loss of pace and slackening of interest. A sharp question period, on the other hand, could do much to save a weak performance. Panel members were sometimes more succinct and forceful in responding to questions than they had been in the main body of the discussion. All the familiar pitfalls, of course, might be encountered: verbose and rambling questions, long statements of opinion, the raising of points already well covered, and the pressing of personal causes and crusades. (For a time during one season, Toronto area broadcast meetings were beset by individual questioners who appeared to see the spread of the international language, Esperanto, as the solution of most world problems.) A modification of the question period, used occasionally in some seasons, was to place the broadcast panel in one studio and a group of questioners in a studio in another part of the country. The view was that considered questions from a selected audience might be more provocative, and bring out more facets of the subject than spur-of-the-moment questions from a broadcast meeting.

The pros and cons of audience participation were fully debated at a meeting of the National Advisory Board as late as June 23, 1960, long after the introduction of television. The discussion had been scheduled because a strong difference of opinion on the subject among Board members had recently been given vigorous expression. The effectiveness of the question period was clearly a continuing issue.

And there were other changes in format. It was the practice, for a few seasons, to open the broadcast with a brief, uninterrupted

statement of position by each of the panel members. This often served to define and clarify the issue, and some groups found it helpful in organizing their discussions. But, it made for a slow opening and one that tended to become too protracted. On a few occasions, special speakers were heard from abroad, or a series of statements took the place of the usual give-and-take exchange. Sometimes, too, the formal panel set-up was abandoned and the broadcast organized as a studio conversation.

Nevertheless, with minor changes, the Citizens' Forum as a radio broadcast was essentially a discussion of a current public issue, by a panel of three or four people holding differing views, under the guidance of an impartial chairman, and along fairly formal lines.

The Selection of Speakers

The dangers to be encountered in the selection of speakers were brought home forcibly even before the program went on the air. Since the list of participants for the first series of broadcasts was not yet complete, Neil Morrison, Morley Callaghan and R.B. Inch went to Ottawa in November to confer with the national political parties and others on some final choices. Brooke Claxton, then parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister and chairman of the newly created Liberal Party Policy Committee, took alarm that the programs were being weighted in favour of CCF party interests. He raised the matter in the sharpest possible terms with the top echelon of the CBC. Matters became increasingly acrimonious. When it appeared that the series might be cancelled, Dr. Corbett, not born yesterday, brought the situation to the attention of his old friend, George V. Ferguson, editor of the Winnipeg Free Press, who obligingly broke the story in his newspaper. Other papers followed suit, and the matter became a public issue. A little late, Citizens' Forum finally went on the air. (A complete account of this political imbroglio can be found in The Politics of Canadian

Broadcasting, 1920 - 1951, by Frank W. Peers, University of Toronto Press, 1969, and in The Passionate Educators, 1919 - 1952, by Ron Faris, Peter Martin Associates, Limited, 1975).

Throughout all the years of the panel format, on both radio and television, Citizens' Forum dealt almost exclusively with controversial current issues. This meant that the first task of program planners was to identify the major positions held on a specific question and, this done, to secure speakers to present and defend these conflicting viewpoints on the air with equal force. But this was a much more difficult task than even friendly listeners realized or than hostile critics would ever admit. No way could be found to ensure that all sides of a given argument would receive an equally effective presentation, even if the speakers chosen had been judged to be equally well-informed and equally committed to their positions. Too many human factors lay beyond the control of planners and producers. It took some time to accept the simple fact that people are not equally articulate, aggressive, persuasive or appealing in presenting their sides of a case. They are not equally at ease before an audience, quick to clinch a point, to turn the laugh on an opponent, or to avoid a verbal trap.

It proved impossible to predict an individual's performance on the air. A supposedly combative person might turn unaccountably mild before the microphones. A strong participant could be thrown off stride in the opening moments of a discussion, lose direction, and fail to drive home some of his major points. There were constant surprises.

Unevenness of performance, however, though a major concern, was by no means the only problem in building balanced panels. In practice it proved much more difficult to secure adequate spokesmen for some viewpoints than for others. There can be little question that throughout the program's first decade at least, the "business" position, broadly speaking, was the most difficult spot to fill. Canada's wartime industrial explosion had greatly increased

the size, the power and the militancy of the trade union movement. Issues involving the role of organized labour, many of them new to Canada, were increasingly matters of intense concern. Some Citizens' Forum titles in the late 1940's and through the 1950's make this clear:

- Does Canada Need a National Labour Code?, February, 1946
- Should The Labour Union Stay Out of Politics?, November, 1948
- Should We Have Fair Employment Practices Legislation in Canada?, March, 1948
- Should Industry Provide Employee Pensions and Insurance?, March, 1950
- Does Democracy Work In the Labour Union?, November, 1950
- Equal Pay For Equal Work: Are Women Getting a Fair Deal?, December 1950
- Have Big Unions Too Much Power?, November, 1951
- Should Labour Have The Right To Strike In Public Services?, March 1950
- Resolved That: Strikes Are Never Necessary?, October 1956
- Are Big Unions Less Democratic?, March, 1958
- International Unions: Do They Help Canadian Labour?, March, 1959

Spokesmen for the unions were eager to bring their side of such issues to the public. Little difficulty was ever encountered in lining up forceful labour speakers. Employers, on the other hand, sometimes in the midst of difficult negotiations with their unions, tended to be unconvinced that their best interests would be served by publicly revealing their position on such questions. They saw no gain for themselves in a public probing of their affairs and their relations with organized labour, on the national network. And they would often politely decline the invitation to engage in one. This was understandable. The labour unions were making new and costly demands of the employers. They had determined their goals and were anxious to declare them to the world at large. Management had formed no plan for united action, and saw much danger in a premature commitment to definite stands. A policy of wait and see - (and in the meantime no pronouncements) - was much safer.

There was another reason for business wariness of participation in Citizens' Forum. Leaders in the labour movement may, in large part, owe their jobs to their ability in free-for-all debate, to their persuasiveness in explaining union goals on public platforms. Leaders in business and industry who, as a rule, owe their positions to a quite different set of talents, were often well aware of being no match for union spokesmen in the unscripted, give-and-take of panel discussion.

Much time and energy were expended in trying to secure adequate representation of the "business position". Many times the supporter of this general interest on the panel was the second, third or even fourth choice of program organizers, and by no means as strong an advocate of his viewpoint as it had been hoped to enlist. Quite often, it was necessary to call upon a journalist or an academic to fill this spot because no businessman personally involved in the issue, or who suspected that he might be in the near future, could be persuaded to join the discussion. Admittedly, this sometimes produced a broadcast in which issues were not sharply enough joined. The discussion would lack real bite because the parties to it did not have an equal stake, an equal self-interest, in a resolution of the question in debate.

In its broad attack on Citizens' Forum in May, 1950, the public relations firm of Johnston, Everson and Charlesworth made specific complaint concerning the program on Employee Pensions and Insurance in March of that year. It pointed, quite correctly, to the absence on the panel of a representative of industrial management. While Larry Sefton, of the United Steelworkers, gave strong support to such a program his fellow panel members, P.M. Richards, Associate Editor of Saturday Night, and Dr. H.M. Logan, Department of Political Economy, University of Toronto, though somewhat critical, had by no means absolutely opposed the pension scheme. The fact was that it had proved impossible to secure the participation of an opponent of the pension proposal from industry.

It is clear that this reluctance of the business community to discuss emerging issues in the labour field in public was a continuing problem. Later that year, in a memorandum of October, 1950, to the manager of a private radio station in Windsor, Ontario, Frank Peers discussed the difficulty he foresaw in forming a balanced panel for the forthcoming broadcast, to originate in that city, on Does Democracy Work In The Labour Union? He was seeking suggestions for local speakers who might be prepared to argue the negative position. He simply took it for granted, on the basis of experience, that this would be the difficult role to fill.

It should be pointed out, in considering the situation, that Citizens' Forum was a weekly program and that the CBC staff available to work on it, both at Toronto headquarters and at regional offices across the country, was severely limited. It was not possible to plan far in advance, nor, in difficult cases, to pursue the far-ranging search for speakers that might have yielded better results.

A somewhat similar problem existed in building panels for the whole range of "social" topics. In questions involving the family, the school, the community and its services, it was much easier to obtain effective spokesmen for the "progressive" than for the "traditional" approach. It might be said that this was simply because it is frequently less difficult and more satisfying to attack the status quo than to defend it. But there was more to it than that. Throughout the Citizens' Forum period, certainly in the early postwar years, demand for social change in such fields was becoming widespread. Broadcast titles reveal some of the rising concerns:

- Probing Our Prejudices, March, 1946
  Racial And Religious Prejudice: How Do We Combat It?, December, 1949
- Psychology Versus The Hairbrush, October, 1947
  Johnny Delinquent: Whose Responsibility?, October, 1948
  Teen-Agers: Freedom Or License?, October, 1949
  Are We Afraid To Discipline Our Children?, October, 1950

- Is Progressive Education A Failure?, November, 1948
  Are The Schools Spoonfeeding Their Students?, October, 1950
  Have Our Schools Forgotten The Three R's?, October, 1950
  Do Parents Have Enough Say In Education?, October 1953

- Do Jobs And Families Mix?, October, 1947
  Does Democracy Work In The Home?, November, 1950

- What Should Our Children Be Taught About Sex?, November, 1949
  What Should We Teach Our Youth About Liquor?, October, 1952
  Do We Want Mental Health Programs In Our Schools?, October 1952

- Are Canadian Prisons Doing Their Job?, April, 1947
  Should We Abolish Capital And Corporal Punishment?, March, 1955
  Can Prisons Reform Criminals?, October, 1955
  Should Drug Addicts Go To Jail?, October, 1959

- What Should We Do For Canada's Older Citizens?, January, 1951
  When Should We Stop Work?, November, 1952

- Resolved That: The Treatment of Alcoholics Should Be Compulsory, January, 1959

Community groups, based on such concerns, were springing up eager to take action. This meant that Citizens' Forum had a ready source of well-equipped advocates of social change and innovation in many fields. Support for the more traditional positions on such issues was less organized and therefore much harder to find. Various degrees of opposition to all such proposals for change no doubt existed. The trouble was that publicly expressed objections to new social approaches were often rabid and ill-informed, what is often called "red neck". Citizens' Forum hesitated to put exponents of such extreme positions on the air, believing that this would serve greatly to discredit much thoughtful conservative opinion. The nub of the difficulty was to find people prepared to present a reasonable, soundly-argued, supportable case for the more traditional position on family, school and close-to-home questions.

Citizens' Forum, of course, made no attempt to adhere to anything approaching a rigid, pro-and-con debate on all issues of this kind. Naturally, no effort was made to offer argument in favour of racial discrimination or the neglect of the older citizen. But, given the program format, it was necessary in all cases to secure a range of opinion on the degree of change desirable or practical, and on the steps to be taken in bringing it about.

Frank Peers discussed this problem in an extended round-robin memo to CBC regional producers in October, 1949. He warned against the danger of too much "sweet reasonableness" in the forthcoming broadcast on Teen-Agers: Freedom Or License. He called for ideas on how to get some real criticism of the teen-ager on the air. He anticipated no lack of sympathy and understanding.

It was this well-recognized difficulty that made the uninhibited performance of Mr. Roy Stewart as the unreconstructed parent on the program Psychology Versus The Hairbrush, in October, 1947, so long remembered. (This, incidentally, was the program that Max Ferguson, the famous Rawhide, chose to take off in one of his well-known radio skits).

Imbalance in panels was less frequently a problem in broadcasts where discussion was organized directly around political party positions. Here the basis for panel selection was clear. There might be complaint that a poor performance by a party spokesman had resulted in an unfair presentation on the air. And individual political figures might be chastised for arrogance, rudeness, weakness or ineptitude. But, so long as the various political parties were represented on the panel by people of relatively equal standing, the program was not open to a charge of bias. Some examples of this directly political approach to a controversial issue illustrate the point:

How Is Canadian External Policy Made? February, 1948
Ottawa

Walter Harris (Parliamentary Assistant to the Liberal Minister for External Affairs)

Gordon Graydon (Progressive Conservative M.P. for Peel, Ontario)

M.J. Coldwell (National Leader of the CCF)

Is Canada Facing A Trade Crisis? March, 1950, Regina

T.C. Douglas (Premier of Saskatchewan, CCF)

Walter Tucker (Leader of Liberal Opposition in Saskatchewan Legislature)

Alvin Hamilton (Leader of P.C. Party in Saskatchewan)

Immigration: Whom Do We Bar And Why? February, 1956, Ottawa

J.W. Pickersgill (Liberal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration)

E. Davie Fulton (Progressive Conservative M.P. for Kamloops, B.C.)

Alistair Stewart (CCF M.P. for Winnipeg North, Manitoba)

In a modification of this approach, prominent political figures might appear on the panel with critics or questioners having no strong party identification:

Are Bureaucrats Running The Country? January, 1950, Toronto

Donald Fleming (Progressive Conservative M.P. for Toronto-Eglinton)

David M. Croll (Liberal M.P. for Toronto-Spadina)

Questioners:

Anne Francis (radio commentator)

Dr. R. MacGregor Dawson (Department of Political Science, University of Toronto)

Party spokesmen sometimes found Citizens' Forum topics an embarrassment and would have preferred not to take part in discussion. But the program did not meet serious and continuing difficulty in securing party speakers until the politically tense days in the autumn of 1962 following the return of a minority Conservative government in the June election. It became all but impossible to organize the scheduled series of national television debates on current political issues. Some of the proposed topics had to be discarded because the speakers necessary to build a balanced panel on the subject were not willing to take part. And little-known back-benchers had frequently to be used because figures of national stature begged to be excused.

It later became common practice for radio and television programs dealing with controversial issues, and for those engaged in investigative reporting, to state quite openly that spokesmen for one or other of the interests involved had refused to be interviewed or to take part in discussion. In this way the program exonerates itself from a possible charge of bias. But it was not thought wise for a discussion program such as Citizens' Forum to avail itself of this protection. There can be little doubt that such action would have created ill-will and have prejudiced the success of future broadcasts. No attempt was made to offer this kind of public excuse when the program failed to secure the participants it sought. It is true that there was one exception to this rule in the incident of December, 1946, on the program Liquor: What Controls Are Necessary? On this occasion, the Reverend John Coburn, the redoubtable fighter for temperance, confided to the listening audience coast to coast that the "liquor interests" were absent that evening, although invited, because "they are afraid to meet me". Though this was probably not far from the plain fact, the statement produced some slight startlement all around. Mr. Coburn was disappointed to be confronted by Dr. E.M. Jellinek, of the Yale School of Alcohol Studies, when he had fully expected to meet a beer baron. (He was astonished when Mrs. Tanis Murray (later Prendergast) of the CBC presented him with the extremely modest fee for his participation. That he should be paid for the privilege of speaking to more people in one half-hour than in all his previous life was beyond his comprehension.)

The choice of participants for specific programs was a permanent item on the agenda of meetings of the Citizens' Forum National Liaison Committee in the early years. And after the creation of the National Advisory Board in the autumn of 1950, questions of broadcast origination and the composition of panels became a central concern. Though in no formal way, Board members did speak for a wide range of opinion and interest. In their own special fields, they were in a position to offer much valuable information on the relative abilities of speakers proposed and under consideration,

and to suggest new names of qualified people across the country. The Board was thus of great practical assistance in the actual building of panels. And such help was not available only at meetings. CBC staff was in frequent contact with individual Board members as the process of selection continued.

But, after wide consultation, and sometimes a daily exchange of views with CAAE staff, it was recognized that the CBC had the final word in the choice of speakers. It was responsible to the people of Canada for what was heard on the public broadcasting system. It could not abrogate that responsibility. The CAAE understood this situation and fully accepted it. Nevertheless, the CBC's over-riding authority in the naming of broadcast participants occasioned some questioning.

Disagreement with the principle of CBC authority in the matter of speakers was at least partly the reason why the Canadian Institute of International Affairs failed to become a full working partner in the Citizens' Forum project at its inception. The executive of the CIIA feared that the proposed arrangements would not ensure the Institute a sufficient measure of control over broadcasts. Also, there can be little doubt that this same unease was at the back of CAAE President James Muir's intense displeasure with Citizens' Forum during the 1951-52 season. His specific objection at the time was to certain sentences in two current Citizens' Forum study pamphlets. But it was evident that behind this lay a fundamental disapproval of the nature of the CAAE's relationship with the CBC. He felt that the Association had placed itself in a vulnerable position by lending its name to a program over which it had not ultimate control.

Complaint about the selection of speakers and the balance of opinion on panels might come from members of the general listening public, from the organized forums, members of the National Advisory Board, or from those actively working with the program across the country. But such criticism rarely took the form of an attack on

the project itself, or a questioning of its intentions. The most concerted and deliberate assault on the whole Forum operation occurred in the 1949-50 program season, in a letter sent out to a section of its clientele by the public relations firm of Johnston, Everson and Charlesworth. The newsletter complained bitterly of bias in specific broadcasts, and one instance has already been noted. But the charges were much more sweeping. Such bias was declared to be a conscious policy. Citizens' Forum, as well as Farm Forum, it was alleged, was a mouthpiece for left-wing interests, and speakers were deliberately chosen to express radical views. To show up the free enterprise system in a bad light was central to the program's purpose. The political bent of the CAAE and of its Director, Dr. E. A. Corbett, was well-known, it was claimed, and since it was he who selected the speakers for these programs, only one result could be expected.

Some associates of the CAAE happened to be on the Johnston, Everson and Charlesworth mailing list, and the document was passed on to the Director. The newsletter produced little by way of evidence to substantiate the accusations concerning the program's aims and general performance. Dr. Corbett was not active in any political party and the charge concerning his malign influence in the selection of panel members was, of course, totally false. He was a member of the National Advisory Board over the years and usually attended its meetings when in town. But he had no more direct influence over the conduct of the program than his fellow board members. In fact, since he was on-the-road so much of the time, he probably made fewer suggestions for panel speakers than most of the others.

Many of the problems were created because of the high standards set for Citizens' Forum. It must live up to the canons of excellent public education and invariably offer access and fair play to all responsible interests. Perfection respecting these difficult objectives was rarely achieved but always attempted. On the whole the record is an outstanding one. For

twenty years or so, on scores of subjects of the utmost political and social controversy, involving the interests of all shades of political, economic and social position, the program never failed to be produced, and rarely, if ever, failed to provide an informed and reasonably balanced presentation.

BROADCAST MEETINGS AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

A major recommendation passed at the Citizens' Forum conference in Toronto in May of 1947 was that broadcasts in future should originate in public meetings across the country with audience questions carried on the air. Such a policy was seen to have several advantages over the studio production. It would bring the program right into a community, and involve its citizens in the broadcasting process. And it would give the listener a chance to play an active part in the discussion, to question, challenge, dispute with the "experts" on the panel. The questioner in the hall would speak for the many at home.

It is clear from Douglas Clark's record of his efforts during the 1947-48 season that the arranging of these broadcast meetings was a time-consuming business. But it was generally agreed that they were highly successful in promoting the program, and were well worth the trouble. Indeed, the public meeting in Brantford, Ontario, for the program, Do Jobs And Families Mix?, October 29, 1947, was counted little short of a major community event.

The cutback in Citizens' Forum staff in the autumn of 1948, however, forced a change in the procedure. There was no longer a full-time national secretary free to travel, so the national office could not continue to assume the major responsibility for actually organizing broadcast meetings held at any great distance from the Toronto headquarters. From that time on, CBC regional producers, with the assistance of the provincial or local Citizens' Forum organization, were obliged to handle arrangements with the community "broadcast sponsoring" body.

It is clear that this additional task was no light one. In a round-robin letter to CBC regional producers in August, 1949, Frank Peers stresses that the organizing and staging of these meetings must not become a last-minute, rush-up job. They called

for detailed, advanced planning. Results will be unsatisfactory, he warns, unless the meetings are given adequate publicity, and unless procedures with the audience and the question period are carefully worked out ahead of time.

Broadcast meetings were usually "sponsored" by local branches of major voluntary organizations. A local association might request to sponsor a specific program in its field of special interest. Or, once the point of broadcast origination had been determined, an appropriate local organization might be asked if it would be interested in sponsorship. The sponsoring body undertook to provide the audience, to see that it was assembled well in advance of the broadcast hour, and to make sure that its members understood their responsibility to ask pertinent and probing questions when called upon. The CBC carried any costs involved in renting the broadcast hall, and usually provided printed invitation cards.

Many organizations saw broadcast-meeting sponsorship as an opportunity to bring their own interests and activities in the field under discussion to the attention of their community. The meeting chairman (to be distinguished from the broadcast moderator) might be drawn from the association's membership, and its publications and publicity could be displayed in the meeting hall along with Citizens' Forum materials. Sometimes, too, local associations of a more general kind would sponsor a broadcast meeting chiefly to provide a novel event for the membership.

It was always made clear, however, that sponsorship conveyed no power to name the speakers on the panel, nor to direct the development of the discussion on the air. It was over this issue that Douglas Clark became embroiled in the winter of 1947 in a most embarrassing incident with his former colleagues at the University of British Columbia. The Department of Extension there had agreed to see to the organization of the broadcast meeting for the December program on, Is National Planning A Threat to Democracy?

UBC staff members had assumed that they might proceed to choose a chairman and discussion participants. It was necessary to inform them that this was absolutely out of the question, and that any invitations already extended must be withdrawn. It was natural that a competent extension department, in close touch with the community and its resources, should consider itself thoroughly capable of selecting local speakers. (Perhaps more so, it was hinted, than CBC staff in Toronto). As the correspondence reveals, some hot words were exchanged, but common sense quickly reasserted itself. The rule was maintained that a broadcast-sponsoring body in the community had no authority to choose Citizens' Forum panel speakers, whether such sponsoring body were a major university department of extension, or a small local organization.

Local branches of such organizations as the United Nations Association, the Canadian Home and School Association, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Consumers' Association of Canada, the YM-YWCA, the Community Planning Association, and labour organizations, chambers of commerce, welfare councils, student bodies, junior boards of trade, and many other groups across the country, served as sponsors. The Ottawa branch of the United Nations Association, and the student organization of Queen's University were, perhaps, the most frequent individual sponsors. And they never failed to produce a large and spirited audience. But the Home and School Association, in its various provincial branches, was the organization involved more frequently than any other in sponsorship over the years.

The policy of holding public broadcast meetings faced its most serious problems when the discussion on the air centered on an issue evoking intense and emotional conflict of opinion. Some of the labour-management topics, questions concerning the power of big business, and big unions, and issues such as health insurance, subsidized public housing, immigration, and French-English relations,

could be cases in point. If it was essential to strive for a balanced panel in dealing with subjects of this sort, it was almost equally necessary to assure some balance of opinion in the audience, and, thus, in the question period. This was doubly important since the practice was, so far as possible, to originate broadcasts in communities where the subject matter involved was particularly relevant.

One example may illustrate the difficulty. It was generally agreed that the town of Oshawa, Ontario, the home of General Motors, was the logical choice for the broadcast on, Should The Labour Union Stay Out Of Politics?, November, 1948. Oshawa was the territory of the United Auto Workers' Union, a force in the Canadian Congress of Labour, and an ardent advocate of trade union political action. The national secretary, Isabel Wilson, well aware of possible trouble ahead, succeeded in lining up a joint sponsorship for the public meeting: the Oshawa Labour Council and the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce. In two visits to Oshawa, she pointed out to the Chamber executive the extreme importance of securing a good attendance of their membership on the broadcast evening, and of being ready with an aggressive participation in the question period. In the event, the Chamber members turned out in only fair force and sat, for the most part, in indignant silence while the embattled union took over the meeting. There can be no doubt that it was a lively performance. Elsie Park Gowan, on the radio program, Critically Speaking, as long afterward as December, 1949, had this to say:

> The best forum I remember hearing came last year from Oshawa on the topic of labour unions in politics...The speakers were uttering the truths they live by, and no announcers had to flutter their hands in front of that audience to tell them when to applaud. They gave British cheers, they gave Bronx cheers, and they proved that an intellectual wrestling match can be as much fun as the other kind.

The trouble was that it is not in the tradition of the Chamber of Commerce to give "Bronx cheers".

(The personal embarrassment of the national secretary was increased by the fact that her cousin, a prominent member of the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, gave a pleasant coffee party at his house for the panel members and assorted CBC and CAAE staff after the broadcast.)

Years later, in the 1959-60 season, the local division of the Canadian Medical Association was chosen to form the nucleus of the audience for the TV origination from Winnipeg on the topic, Do We Want A Comprehensive Government Health Plan? Judgment had erred. Almost every comment from the floor was hostile to a government plan. And the program was in serious trouble.

On at least one notable occasion, the holding of a Citizens' Forum broadcast meeting was barred because the authorities in the community saw it as a possibly divisive force. The local Home and School Association of Welland, Ontario, was interested in sponsoring a meeting for the broadcast on, Should There Be Religious Education In Our Public School System?, November 10, 1949. They found that their plan did not meet with the approval of the Welland Board of Education. The Association executive, eager to organize a local broadcast event, and believing that this topic too was an important one for their town, suggested sponsoring the broader question: Racial And Religious Prejudice: How Do We Combat It?, scheduled for December 8, 1949. The Board, again, stated its firm opposition and withheld consent. A spokesman averred the discussion of either of these topics in a public meeting would be a disservice to the community under existing circumstances. The incident indicates the difficulties that could arise when a Citizens' Forum topic was too relevant to local problems.

The dangers of the biased broadcast meeting were all too apparent. In its monitoring of Citizens' Forum programs in the spring of 1950, Johnston, Everson and Charlesworth made special note of audience behaviour.

Here are some excerpts from their comments:

How Should The West Deal With The Soviet Bloc?, February 9, 1950.

> However, it was in the question period following the main discussion that he gained any advantage, because it was quite obvious that local party members had turned out to the meeting in force. Between them, they pretty well monopolized the question period, both by leading questions to Edwards, and what they hoped were embarrassing questions to the other speakers.

The broadcast took place in Calgary with the meeting sponsored by the Knights of the Round Table. The broadcast chairman was Harry F. Francis, past President of the Canadian Club of that city, with panelists, Florence F. Todd, a Calgary high school teacher, R.J. Needham, Associate Editor of the Calgary Herald, and Lionel Edwards, a member of the Labour Progressive Party. No doubt, Mr. Edwards encouraged his fellow party members to attend the meeting (as he had every right to do), and they proved to be more aggressive participants than the other members of the audience. This is the kind of outcome it was almost impossible to guard against. The charge was that Citizens' Forum should never have permitted the inclusion of "an admitted communist" on the program.

What Is The Best Approach To World Peace?, February 16, 1950.

> The audience was, as usual, heavily loaded with left-wing sympathizers, who applauded every statement made by Phelps and Lewis vigorously, but preserved a glum silence for Woodside.

The broadcast originated in Ottawa, and was sponsored by the Ottawa branch of the United Nations Association. The broadcast chairman

was Frank Peers of the CBC, and the speakers, Kathleen Bowlby, National Secretary of the U.N.A., Arthur L. Phelps, Professor of English at McGill University, Willson Woodside, Foreign Affairs Editor of Saturday Night, David Lewis, National Secretary of the CCF, and Dr. J.P.S. Cathcart, Chief Neuro-Psychiatrist, Department of Veterans Affairs. It would be difficult to detect any organized source of extreme opinion in the meeting's makeup.

Should Industry Provide Employee Pensions And Insurance?, March 9, 1950.

> As usual, in these programs, the most flagrant propaganda came in the question period from the obviously biased audience.

The broadcast originated in Hamilton and was sponsored by the Hamilton Film Council, with Frank Peers as chairman. The problem with this broadcast, as noted in the section discussing balance in panels, was the lack of success in securing speakers strongly opposed to the pension scheme to combat Larry Sefton, of the United Steelworkers Union, on his home territory in Hamilton.

On some occasions, because of the nature of the discussion, or, perhaps, simply because of difficulties encountered in making local arrangements, it would be decided to dispense with the public broadcast meeting. There were several alternatives: two or three journalists, or a small group of invited guests, would be asked to question the speakers, or a special studio audience in another part of the country would be organized to provide questions. These methods could produce a less vigorous broadcast, but they offered some safeguards against the unbalanced question period in highly contentious issues.

This form of public meeting had its stresses, as does almost any form of education that deals seriously with the burning issues of the day. But the meetings that drew complaint, even from the most censorious, were few, and were greatly outnumbered

by those that received general approbation. In this way, many a group or community was able to play host to a national audience, and share in the searching consideration of an issue affecting all citizens, and such an opportunity was greatly coveted and warmly remembered.

STUDY PAMPHLETS

The preparation of Citizens' Forum study pamphlets presented two major difficulties: first, that of finding adequate Canadian materials or experience on many of the subjects up for discussion, and second, that of achieving an evenhanded treatment of a succession of controversial issues. The country was exploding with new concerns, problems and conflicts. Citizens' Forum prided itself on tackling the hard questions Canadians were only beginning to ask. If this might not be easy to do on the air, it was even less so in print. Once speakers had agreed to take part in a broadcast, they voiced their own opinions, and produced what evidence they could muster in support of their own views. The pamphlets, however, were supposed to provide a sound basis for group discussion, a summary of fact, and a balance of opinion, in the light of which the citizen could make up his own mind. This meant a continued search for accurate, authoritative information on subjects which frequently had not yet received serious treatment by academics and journalists, or, an almost equal difficulty, the attempt to adapt American facts and figures to Canadian conditions. It also meant the need to adopt a pro-and-con approach to complex, frequently explosive questions. This is not only a difficult assignment, it can be argued that it is humanly impossible to line up arguments for and against any proposal or policy with complete fairness. The final argument or position advanced by a writer is so often seen as a rebuttal to all the foregoing.

Perhaps, the greatest difficulty was experienced with the new labour issues: the need for a national labour code, the call for fair employment practices legislation, the question of compulsory retirement, the problems involved in collective bargaining and union security. Impartial, non-technical

discussions of such questions were almost impossible to find. Another rising topic was the issue of immigration and its effects on employment. Canadian academics over the recent years had done little work in this field, probably due to the long period of depression and war when it was not an active problem. But, with the large-scale postwar arrival of people called D.P.'s (displaced persons), questions surrounding who was to be admitted to Canada and why became insistent. Another growing concern centered on racial prejudice, discrimination and inter-cultural tensions. American sociologists were producing an increasing volume of studies in such fields, and much attention was directed toward the "Springfield Plan", a project in Springfield, Massachusetts, for easing community relationships. Citizens' Forum scheduled a number of programs in this general field before similar Canadian studies existed.

After a quick investigation of local libraries, a quite usual procedure was to write as early as possible to individuals and appropriate organizations asking for help of several kinds. The first need was often for advice concerning the coverage of the topic. What were the most important aspects of the subject to deal with? Around what points did the sharpest controversy centre? Suggestions of sources of background information on what were often unfamiliar topics - and how to lay hands on it - were often forthcoming on enquiry. Word of special pamphlets that might be available on request by group members, or of non-technical magazine articles was most useful in compiling the pamphlet reading lists.

A few examples of special one-time response may serve to show the kind of help often extended. The American Jewish Congress sent Citizens' Forum sample copies of several of its own publications, and of others in its collection, on the subject of fair employment practices legislation. As well, it prepared a highly selective list of materials which could be obtained by

group members from other sources. The Bank of Nova Scotia provided a sufficient supply of its Newsletter on immigration to send to provincial offices for distribution to groups, and Maclean's supplied off-prints of an article, Are The Yanks Invading Canada?, as a useful comment on Canadian-American relations. The Clinic of Child Development at Yale University made available two transcripts of Chicago Round Table broadcasts on topics in the field of child training. The Education Department of the Columbia Broadcasting System offered the transcript of an outstanding broadcast on, Is The UN Failing? And the Bureau of Intercultural Education in New York responded helpfully to a request for materials.

But many organizations were close to the pamphlet operation over the years, offering help again and again in a special field, or in a wide range of related topics. It would be impossible to list them all, but some of those most often appealed to were:

Bureau of Municipal Research (Eric Hardy)

Canadian Citizenship Council (John Kidd, Walter Herbert)

Canadian Congress of Labour (Eugene Forsey, Andrew Andras)

Canadian Council of Churches (Frank Fidler, Kenneth Wills)

Canadian Education Association (Freeman Stewart)

Canadian Institute of International Affairs (Margaret Avison, Gordon Cullingham)

Canadian Jewish Congress (Manfred Saalheimer)

Canadian Mental Health Association (Margery King, J.D. Griffin)

Canadian Welfare Council (Marjorie King, Patricia Godfrey)

Canadian Youth Commission (R.E.G. Davis)

Community Planning Association (Alan Armstrong, Eric Beecroft)

Consumers' Association of Canada (Beryl Plumptre)

John Howard Society (Alex Edmison, A.M. Kilpatrick).

The emergency decision to combine the roles of national secretary and publications secretary - with the actual preparation of pamphlets in the hands of "outside writers" - was announced at

the CAAE Executive meeting late in October, 1948. The minutes record no questions raised. That there should be such an easy acceptance of the altered situation seems surprising. Evidently, there was no anticipation of any practical difficulty in the change or of any possible effects on the total program. The "farming out" of the discussion pamphlets was, of course, by no means the automatic process it was made to sound. Citizens' Forum had no corps of writers on call, and was totally unprepared for the move. But, as far as pamphlet production itself was concerned, once the process was set going, with constant consultation, for the most part it worked fairly smoothly. Citizens' Forum met a surprising acceptance of the role of pamphlet writer from a variety of people. It was remarkable that so many men and women, journalists, broadcasters, free-lance writers and academics, accustomed to using their own names and expressing their own opinions were ready to adjust to the absence of a by-line and to the restrictions imposed by the program's purposes. And one thing is certain. The inducement was not financial.

Among the Ottawa journalists who took part were: Warren Baldwin, Blair Fraser, Anne Francis (Mrs. John Bird), Kenneth Wilson, Robert McKeown, and Ronald Grantham; from Toronto, J.B. McGeachy, Jean Tweed, Wilfred List, Edith Fowke, Sidney Katz, Harriet Rouillard and Elizabeth Loosley, both as editors of Food For Thought, and Robert Weaver; from Montreal, Walter O'Hearn, Gerard Pelletier and Thomas Sloan; from Winnipeg, Jean Edmonds; from Washington, Max Freedman. Among academics were: Wilfred Eggleston, Carleton College; Michael Oliver, McGill University; W.G. Phillips, Assumption College, Windsor; John Barnes, Ryerson Institute of Technology, Toronto; and James Eayrs, Stephen Clarkson, Ian McDonald, Paul Fox, Murray Ross, Marcus Long, University of Toronto. Alan Porter, Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour; R.A.J. Phillips, Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources; Elizabeth Govan, Canadian Welfare Council; Mary Avison, of the Home and School Association of Quebec; and David Archibald, of the Alcoholism Research Foundation, were among

others who gave their services. These people made a substantial contribution to the program.

Naturally, there were some difficulties. Much time could be consumed in the "farming out" process. Particularly, at a distance, the need to discuss the nature of the program, the intended treatment of the topic, the coverage, and the available materials, with the writer, could pose problems and cause delays. Scripts could be too difficult or too opinionated. And, through some failure in communication, much too long or too short. A few times most seasons no outside writer would be found. And some pamphlets were what might be called half-and-half jobs. An outside authority would agree to furnish material in rough form, but not to produce a finished text.

Citizens' Forum pamphlets never faced the organized opposition of any group in the community. Nothing comparable to the monitoring of broadcasts ever occurred with the printed word. Critical comment would be directed at individual titles, and from a variety of angles, but no accusation of intentional slanting was ever levelled at the series as a whole. The most serious and continued criticism occurred in the autumn of 1951, and, unfortunately, centered around the CAAE's President, James Muir, President of the Royal Bank of Canada.

It should be pointed out that Mr. Muir's unease with the Forums was not confined to his view that the CBC exercised too much control over the choice of speakers. The fact was that he much deplored the whole subject matter treated in Citizens' Forum. He believed that the CAAE should deal with "educational" and "cultural" subjects, and should not concern itself with contentious issues. He was disturbed not only that the CAAE should give publicity to opinions with which he disagreed, but that it should offer <u>any</u> opinions on such matters.

Plans for the preparation of the pamphlet on <u>How Can We Get Bread And Milk To The Consumer Most Cheaply?</u>, scheduled for November 1,

had broken down due to illness in the proposed writer's family. So the offence was committed at headquarters. Issues arising in the recent McGregor investigation into combines in the milling and other industries lay behind the choice of topic. So the McGregor Report was central to the discussion. At one point in the pamphlet text, a brief, direct quotation from the Report was used, without comment, but equally without rebuttal. It is difficult to see how trouble could have been avoided. It was built-in. The industry regarded the McGregor Report as a "prejudiced document". It is clear that it would have expected a full statement of the case it made at the hearings, if the Report's findings were used at all. Given the situation, the very worst happened. A member of Mr. Muir's Board of Directors was a prominent figure in the milling industry. At a Board meeting he brought the pamphlet to the President's attention in the most embarrassing manner. Mr. Muir was extremely angry and communicated the fact to the CAAE.

While this matter was still extremely hot, a further inflammatory incident occurred. Another potentially dangerous topic, Has Big Business Too Much Power?, was scheduled for November 29. Ironically enough, the pamphlet had been prepared by Kenneth Wilson, a well-known and able Ottawa journalist on the Financial Post, a man whom nobody, friend or foe, could ever have called a radical. But the copy, as it came in, was considerably short. Believing (as did some others) that the material was a little overly protective of the big business world, both to fill some of the space and to provide a greater balance, the editor added a piece of CCF party research, clearly labelled as such, in a box. Unfortunately, the extract contained the dynamite phrase "interlocking directorates", and expressed the view that these often involved bankers. Mr. Muir, now alert to the pamphlets, discovered this himself, was outraged, and made further charges against the pamphlet operation.

The meeting of the National Council of the CAAE, at which the storm was expected to break, took place in the Senate Chamber, U. of T., on Saturday, November 24, with Mr. Muir in the chair. Although it was Grey Cup Saturday, Council members were there in force, including Dr. Sidney Smith, President of the University, and Dr. Malcolm Wallace, a member of the Advisory Board who was scheduled to give the Citizens' Forum report to the meeting. It may be that Mr. Muir detected a certain lack of sympathy with his viewpoint. And it may be that his great respect for Dr. Wallace made him reluctant to launch an attack. In any event, when the meeting reached the Citizens' Forum item on the agenda, Mr. Muir, announcing that he was due at lunch with the Lieutenant-Governor, asked Dr. Corbett to take the chair.

The Citizens' Forum Advisory Board greatly resented the imputation that there had been a record of bias in the pamphlets and, at first, determined to take no action in reviewing their method of production. Later that winter, however, two meetings were given over to a consideration of possible further safeguards. In its statement of strong support, the Board proposed an added step in the process of consultation. When a pamphlet was completely ready for press, an outside authority, who had had nothing at all to do with its preparation at any stage, should be asked to take a final look. It was a matter of some gratification that the motion to pass the favourable Advisory Board report on to the CAAE Executive was moved by C.S. Matthews, of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, and seconded by Charles Harris, representing the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. This additional safeguard was helpful, but did not prevent at least one expression of anger by an organization that considered none of the persons associated with the pamphlet had any claim to competence or objectivity. Yet, considering the heat of the issues, such conflicts were few.

It was seldom possible to issue printed material for the IN THE NEWS topics. They were decided upon too close to broadcast date. Frequently, a brief background to the topic was sent to provincial

offices in mimeographed form with, of course, the reading list and the discussion questions. Considerable time was spent in drawing up the suggested further reading, and it was regrettable that it did not reach groups earlier. Fairly often, a list covering three of four forthcoming topics was compiled, but only once, in the 1947-48 season, was a special pamphlet issued supplying reading suggestions for the entire year. What complaint there was centered on the discussion questions. Consultation took place with the CBC and with others regarding them, but it would have to be admitted that their framing was often a last-minute job. No established method for question testing was ever developed. Also, it was not possible to predict the development of the discussion on the air. If it took an unexpected direction, the questions might prove an ineffective follow-up.

SOME PROPOSALS FOR PROGRAM CHANGE

It very early became clear that the organizing of large numbers of continuing groups was going to be no easy matter under existing circumstances. Soon questions began to be raised concerning the structure, the content, and the style of the program. What could be done to make group membership more attractive? This was the constant query in correspondence and at conferences.

Clearly, involvement in Citizens' Forum meant a considerable commitment of a group member's time. The program came on the air in early October and continued until well into April. There was always a break for Christmas week, but, unless the holiday fell on the actual broadcast evening, none was scheduled at the New Year. Groups following the series conscientiously could find themselves meeting some 25 or more times during the season. (As Robert McKenzie put it at the meeting of the CAAE Council, March 22, 1947: "...it is probably inevitable that no very large percentage of the population will ever be willing to set aside 26 consecutive Tuesday evenings for discussing current problems".) Though the social aspect of group meetings might well be a factor in attracting membership - certainly, some groups were formed by people who were already close friends, or colleagues, or both - the Citizens' Forum project made its greatest appeal to active, busy men, and women, who were not, primarily, looking for new ways to spend their time, or new outlets for their energies.

Alex Sim was convinced that larger numbers might be drawn into the program if groups were not so closely committed to a weekly meeting, if the structure of the program permitted them, perhaps, encouraged them, to concentrate on segments of the series. In April, 1946, he made a proposal, based on an earlier suggestion from a Quebec forum, that broadcast topics be organized into four major subject areas:

.current issues (to be decided upon close to broadcast date)

.community action

.world affairs

.Canadian affairs.

And he hoped that organizations, such as the Home and School Association and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, would offer their cooperation and support in the organizing and promoting of programs in their special fields of concern.

Under the plan, Citizens' Forum would carry topics in the four sub-series in consecutive weeks. A group, if it wished, could center its activities around one, or perhaps, two, sections of the total program. It would, in this case, meet once or twice a month, instead of every week, and could focus its attention on the main interests of its members.

Robert McKenzie's major proposal, made at the conclusion of his term as Citizens' Forum national secretary (1946-47), would also have had the effect of lessening the commitment of time involved in group membership. Admittedly, his plan for the organizing of Fixed and Ad Hoc broadcasts was made chiefly in the interests of developing two distinct types of program on the air. The assumption, however, was that groups would come together mainly around the Fixed series, the only one for which study pamphlets would be prepared, and would, thus, cut in half the number of their meetings.

Suggestions of this sort received some support, but were never seized upon with real enthusiasm. Certainly, no drive developed to undertake the task of restructuring the series along the proposed lines.

More serious and continued questioning centered on the basic subject matter of Citizens' Forum. Questions of program content were raised almost every time program planners exchanged views - at conferences, in correspondence, or over the lunch table. Several of those close to the program, Guy Henson, prominent among them,

argued that it would be impossible to maintain a flourishing group project around the kind of topic then being dealt with. The contention was that people in any large numbers could not be organized to discuss international issues and questions in the broad field of public affairs in a weekly program extending over a 7-month period. The problems raised in such topics are too far removed from everyday concerns to hold group interest. Most certainly, this would be the case once the novelty of the activity had worn off. Instead, the forums should be tackling issues "of immediate and personal importance", "the more homely problems of citizenship", the "down-to-earth" questions of daily living. Discussion, it was firmly pointed out, can become simply an exercise in futility if it deals mainly with large issues outside the scope of any possible action by individuals where they live. How can it possibly matter what conclusion a Citizens' Forum group reaches on some question, what solution it advocates for some problem, if it can do nothing about the situation in hand anyway? Why not deal with subjects about which people can do something?

Andrew Andras, Assistant Director of Research, Canadian Congress of Labour, made this point in the strongest terms. In a frank reply to a call from the national office for help in group organization, he gave it as his firm opinion that union members would refuse to meet for discussion week after week with no practical end in view. Listening groups would never build in the trade union movement unless they provided channels for action. Indeed, in his mind, whether or not a proposed topic offered possibilities for group activity should be a major consideration in its selection. Further, Citizens' Forum should provide some guidance on how to turn group discussion into a force for community change.

But others saw the relation between discussion and action as a much more complicated matter. Basic objections were raised to what was seen as an over-simplification of the problem. It was

questioned whether national network programs, such as Citizens' Forum, were, in fact, an effective means for stimulating action in the community. It was pointed out that, in our federal system, many matters that affect daily living most directly - (and matters on which citizens most commonly do take action) - fall under provincial or municipal responsibility: schools, housing, urban renewal, development, highways, industrial pollution, environment protection, family and community services, child care, and urban transportation, to name a few. Provincial and local policies in such fields vary widely. And, even more important, so do regional economic and social conditions. What is a sound course of action to adopt in one part of Canada may be out of the question in another. There could be no easy assurance that a concentration on "close-to-home" topics would offer a solution to the problem of maintaining group interest through group involvement in local projects. National programs, it was contended, may raise issues and arouse concern, but they do not give people the specific, detailed information they need to find solutions to the problem as they meet it on their own doorstep.

Mary Bishop, Manitoba's energetic provincial secretary during the program's third and fourth seasons, was much concerned with this relationship between discussion and action and its effect on group organization. And she made an interesting proposal. She advanced the view that Citizens' Forum broadcasts involving the possibility of direct community response should be organized at the provincial level, and in the provincial context. The wider implications of the question could be dealt with in a brief final section of the broadcast carried on the national network. And the printed study material would continue to supply basic information and provide a broad, national view of the matters at issue. Mrs. Bishop was by no means ready to dispense with the treatment of large national and international questions. She was arguing only that Citizens' Forum topics that raised the possibility of direct local action should be dealt with in local terms - both on the air and in the groups. In this way, problems would be studied at firsthand. And local group discussion might produce some practical, workable solutions that would win wide

acceptance in the community. As the forums gained a sense of useful purpose, it was her conviction that their numbers would increase.

Mary Bishop outlined her ideas to Dan Cameron, the CBC Talks producer in Winnipeg. He found the proposal of considerable interest and passed it along to CBC Toronto headquarters, in February, 1946, in an extended memo. Though the plan was given a sympathetic hearing, it could not command serious consideration. Whatever its merits, its implementation was seen as simply not feasible under existing conditions. Citizens' Forum was only one of the many responsibilities carried by CBC regional Talks producers. To prepare separate provincial, or even regional, broadcasts on all "community" topics in the series - (perhaps, something like one-third of the total number) - was not remotely possible for this extremely limited staff. There can be little doubt that, with sufficient resources of manpower and money, such a combination of regional and national broadcast origination could have produced a unique and most effective treatment of a range of subjects. And the inception of the 45-minute radio broadcast in the 1947-48 season would have increased the chances for the successful development of such an approach.

Nevertheless, it was not simply a matter of the production difficulties involved. Strong objection was also raised on fundamental principle to the idea of regional broadcasts. It was recalled that the chief aim of the founders of Citizens' Forum had been to create a means through which Canadians, from coast to coast, could talk to each other about issues that concerned them, as a people, at home and abroad. It was pointed out that the program had never been designed for what was called "local navel gazing". If one section of the country had special problems, these should be explained to the nation at large, in order to build a greater understanding of Canada's regional diversities and disparities.

For practical purposes, the issue of content boiled down to a matter of emphasis. And topic balance was discussed at length year after year at Citizens' Forum national conferences. Provincial secretaries came armed with their own views and with the comments of their forums. Attitudes might, of course, be affected by the personal or political interests of those working with the program in a given area, or by the opinions of particularly vocal community organizations in that region. It is perhaps safe to say that Ontario gave the strongest support to emphasis on the "practical", "close-to-home", "human" topic. And there can be no question that Saskatchewan, with Professor Gordon on the scene, argued the case for the larger matters of national and international interest most hotly. No one wanted to cut off the outside world to concentrate on the home front. But Professor Gordon would have cheerfully dispensed with all discussion of community matters, which he rather amusingly, but quite inaccurately, in the heat of argument reduced to the term "home beautification".

Most provinces were ready to settle for a mixture of topics. But there was continuing disagreement, sometimes sharp, concerning the proportion of the various ingredients in the mix. The March, 1947, issue of Food For Thought carried an article by K.L. Young, Assistant Director of Ontario's University Adult Education Board, called Citizenship Begins At Home. In this, he argued that "the vast potential of Citizens' Forum" will never be harnessed until the program concentrates on "problems of citizenship which are...far closer to the hearts, the needs, and the thinking of the Canadian people". Unless such a change is made, he predicted, while "Farm Forum grows and becomes an accepted institution in rural communities", Citizens' Forum will remain "relatively static from year to year". Provincial secretaries across the country were asked to send in their reaction to these views. Excerpts from their comments and suggestions appeared in the April-May issue of the journal, and they show the range of opinion among those in closest touch with the problems of group organization.

From early days, too, there was some body of opinion that Citizens' Forum should treat topics in much greater depth. One brief

broadcast was seen as quite inadequate to deal in any satisfactory way with the complex social, economic and political questions the program raised each week. Faced with a new problem each time it met, a group had little or no chance to build on previous discussion, or to acquire a solid base of information on which to form opinion. Would it not be better from the group viewpoint to choose fewer subjects and develop them more thoroughly?

Marjorie Smith, of UBC, was one provincial secretary, among others, who argued for the more extended treatment of at least some subjects. It was her view that Citizens' Forum did not "spend sufficient time to make a fair study of any one question". She advocated experimenting with a brief series of broadcasts to explore the "various phases" of a single topic. Such an idea gained some support from the ranks of the CBC. Stemming from the original Mary Bishop proposal, Dan Cameron later suggested the choosing of eight major themes for a Citizens' Forum program season, and organizing four regional broadcasts on each of these subject areas. In his plan, each regional series would be followed by a national network program in the same topic field.

The question was discussed most fully during the 1947-48 season in an exchange of letters between Douglas Clark and Guy Henson, and members of his staff, in which the whole matter of group organization in that province was thoroughly canvassed. Mr. Henson's major proposal was that Citizens' Forum should no longer deal with such a diverse subject matter. The program should organize short series of from three to six broadcasts, each series directed toward a specific field of public concern. Most important, it should enlist the cooperation of appropriate community organizations in the planning of these series and in encouraging their use. As it was being carried on at present, Citizens' Forum "was shooting birdshot when it should be firing bullets at selected targets". It would take more than a general "interest as citizens in a miscellany of public questions" to persuade people to undertake the work involved in group organization. Writing to Neil Morrison as late as November, 1951, Mr. Henson was still urging the "putting of some real money, time, and brains" into an extended development of a single important subject.

But a major difficulty stood in the way of any move to act on this advice. Though admittedly there was some ambivalence concerning the matter, the base of the program remained the small discussion group organized to meet around the full season's broadcasts. And there was never any body of evidence to show that rank-and-file Citizens' Forum groups favoured any approach of this kind. There was no call from the groups themselves for the building of blocks of broadcasts on a single broad theme. Group comment, both in the annual questionnaire and throughout the year continued to express strong support for a highly varied program.

Another matter in question was broadcast style. Might it not be easier to organize and maintain large numbers of groups if the presentation on the air were less "difficult", less "demanding" of the listener? Was there not too little "straight talk" in everyday language? Harry Avison raised this kind of query with the CBC as early as October, 1945, at the beginning of the program's third season on the air. How "popular" should the program be? What audience was Citizens' Forum "aiming at"?

Dr. Mary Needler, then on the staff of the Brantford Community Council in Ontario, took the most radical stand. She contended that too many experts were used on the program, too much background information was assumed, and modes of expression were too difficult in both broadcasts and pamphlets. She argued the case, not only for a much simpler presentation on the air, but for a conscious effort to appeal to an audience at a lower level of education and sophistication. There was some agreement with her general position, but this was mixed with a good deal of skepticism. There remained the conviction that in attempting to reach out to a new audience, Citizens' Forum would lose a large part of the audience it already had, and certainly, most of its existing groups.

Many saw merit in one or another of these suggestions for program change advanced in the interests of group organization. The plain fact, however, was that a formidable difficulty would have impeded

any attempt at drastic alteration in program content or style. For the first ten years and more, Citizens' Forum was the CBC's major national program for the discussion of public affairs. The Corporation, itself, billed it as "Canada's National Platform". Its mandate was to present conflicting viewpoints on current controversial issues. And it was assumed to address an audience already aware, at least to some extent, of the scope and implications of the questions in debate. To have implemented any of the more radical proposals, the CAAE would have had to persuade the CBC to produce an entirely different program as the basis for the joint sponsorship. And some might argue that this should have been done.

If the program attempted no radical shift in subject matter, the spring of 1948 saw the setting up of a more orderly procedure for topic selection. From the first, groups had been asked to submit suggestions for discussion subjects in the ensuing year. These had always been taken into consideration, but in no systematic way. The actual drawing up of the program had been the responsibility of a small committee of the CBC and the CAAE during the early summer, working on a basis of group views and those expressed at the Citizens' Forum spring conference. The new plan was designed to bring about a more organized method of consultation with the forums. As each broadcast season neared conclusion, usually in early March, a questionnaire was sent out to all groups and individuals registered with the provincial offices. The questionnaire called for group reaction to all aspects of the program in the season just ending. But in the final section, the forums were asked to fill in their proposals for discussion topics in the forthcoming year under three categories: 1) community, 2) national, and 3) international.

The response was always great and the suggestions extremely varied in character; everything from broad generalizations, such as "something about citizenship", "education", "the United Nations", "the family", "democracy", to quite precisely defined issues, and even good program titles. All group suggestions, of whatever nature, were

classified under subject headings. This was a laborious task, and it was sometimes questioned whether or not the time it consumed was warranted. But the argument was that this process was necessary to show clearly where the weight of group interest lay.

Form letters were sent out at the same time as the questionnaires to "consultants" across the country requesting their topic ideas under the same three categories. These were men and women in such fields as journalism, education, business, politics, labour, and international affairs, and people active in community, national and religious organizations. Naturally, new names were added and others dropped from year to year. The "consultant" suggestions were also grouped under subject headings. These were almost always quite specific and sometimes included a brief outline of the ground it was hoped would be covered under the proposed subject.

The small committee then set to work on the assembled materials. Group views were given the dominating role in determining the general areas of discussion, while consultant suggestions were most helpful in breaking the broad fields into clearly defined issues. A tentative list of some 35 topics was drawn up under proposed titles. This contained fewer topics in the international category than in the other two, since it was assumed that the IN THE NEWS programs would deal largely with emerging issues in the outside world. The voting list was then sent out to provincial Citizens' Forum offices, to the consultants, to regional CBC Talks producers, members of the National Advisory Board, and of the CAAE Council. They were asked to mark the topics (usually 16) of their choice and to make suggestions for the rewording of titles.

The final program was the product of the vote count as literally as it was possible to make it. Some judgment had to be used in the interests of program balance, and sometimes to eliminate

repetition, or too great similarity of approach, or implied attitude in different segments of the series. A built-in difficulty was that final topic decisions must be made by mid-summer to allow time for the printing of the program folder. This could lead to embarrassment if subsequent events overtook a scheduled title. Perhaps the most striking example of this occurred in the 1945-46 series when the dating of the program, Let's Do Business With The Russians, March 5, 1946, coincided with the breaking of the Gouzenko spy case. The charge in the subsequent investigations was that some Canadians were already doing just that.

This method of topic selection was followed throughout the years of exclusively radio production, and even into the television period. In any program year, several hundred people would be seriously involved in the process of choosing topics.

A RECONSIDERATION OF THE PROJECT

But the problems encountered in group organization led to suggestions for change in more fundamental matters than program style and content. Douglas Clark's proposals in the spring of 1948 called, not for new subject matter or a new approach, but for a change of direction in the project itself. On a basis of his experience as national secretary in the program's fifth year of operation, he found himself convinced that under existing circumstances, there could be no long-term prospect for a sustained growth in the number of registered, reporting groups. The year had been counted a successful one, with a good topics list, the presence of a full-time national secretary free to travel, and such innovations as the 45-minute broadcast, IN THE NEWS programs, and lively community-sponsored broadcast meetings. Yet, a downward trend in group organization had not been reversed. He anticipated that the season would end with a count of approximately 380 officially registered and functioning groups, a drop of well over 100 in the past two seasons.

At the same time, he was assured through wide contacts with provincial organizations and with key adult educators in the field that Citizens' Forum had a large, enthusiastic and committed listening audience. He argued that the program should stop concentrating all effort on trying to increase formal group registration and should now direct its energies to the building up of the series and its services with the public at large.

He had reached this view midway in his term of office. But it was confirmed in an experiment carried out in the late winter. The National Liaison Committee had become a bit critical of the quality of some of the provincial reporting on the air. At the Committee's instigation, on two occasions (February 11 and 18), the final five-minute provincial report period was preempted and the time used for a promotion of the program on the national network. It became immediately clear from the mail response that the provincial report section of the broadcast had been establishing

little contact with the program's wide listening audience. Obviously, large numbers of people simply did not listen to the provincial segment, but turned the program off at the conclusion of the discussion on the national network. They were thus totally unaware of the role of the CAAE in the project, that the program was designed to stimulate discussion, or that a sample copy of a study pamphlet on the topic of the evening was available on request and could be received weekly for a small outlay of cash. Once this information, along with the CAAE address, was conveyed to the general public, audience mail streamed into the national office, with more than 200 subscriptions to the pamphlet in the first few days. And a surprising number of writers commented on the amount of discussion the program gave rise to within their families, and among their friends and colleagues. Douglas Clark was strengthened in his contention that it was no longer reasonable to judge the success of the project solely in terms of group participation.

In his continuing concern with the group aspect of Citizens' Forum, he conferred with both the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the BBC on their experience with listening groups based on radio programs. He found the Australian Nation's Forum Of The Air to be too different in organization to offer any useful comparison. The program did not organize continuing groups, but registered them for only one specific set of broadcasts. And group members took no part in the planning and the carrying on of the program. But the BBC's project was seen as reasonably comparable and its reply therefore provoked some serious reflection. Word came that the adult listening groups had been discontinued because "for some reason, the listening group idea never really caught on". (An added comment, meant to be helpful, cast little light on the Citizens' Forum situation: "This may have been due to the variety of other educational and social activities available and possibly also to the fact that there is not the same sense of isolation in our country districts as may exist in the more remote areas of your country".) The BBC experience was distinctly unencouraging.

If a small, compact, unitary country such as England could not maintain a listening group structure, how, it might be asked, could Canada, with ten provincial governments, five time zones, enormous regional disparities, and a severe winter, hope to do so? In England, the program could establish a convenient evening broadcast hour, say 8:30, which would serve group meetings the length and breadth of the land. Citizens' Forum groups, on the other hand, might be obliged to meet as late as 9:30 in the Maritimes and as early as 7:00 on the Prairies.

The Clark position, as expressed in correspondence and in his year-end report, might be summarized in this way: The present Citizens' Forum topics are not those that will hold large numbers of people for a full season of discussion. To sustain a really vigorous group organization, we would need to choose subjects much closer to the everyday interests, concerns, and problems of the average person. Or, on the other hand, we would need to direct the program to the specific interests of a special segment of the population. But if we want to maintain a program of broad public issues - and I strongly believe that we should - then let us admit frankly that the organized, registered, reporting group is no longer the chief end we have in view.

Specific proposals were that group services should be reduced and that effort should be directed to the development of the general listening audience and the stimulation of audience response, the encouragement of informal discussion, the building up of pamphlet subscriptions and the improvement of their format, the organizing of broadcast meetings, and - perhaps most important - to promoting the special use of individual broadcasts and sections of the program by community organizations and institutions.

The Clark report came up for discussion at the Citizens' Forum conference that April. The meeting was held in Vancouver because the CAAE's President, Dr. Gordon Shrum, had invited the Association to hold its annual conference in that city in conjunction with the

meeting of the Learned Societies. This was unfortunate for Citizens' Forum. Most provincial secretaries could not command the heavy travel expenses involved in a trip to the West coast. The hope had been that the spring conference that year could bring together a large number of those actively engaged in the program in down-to-earth working sessions. Brief meetings of local CF people in Montreal, Toronto, and Saskatoon, could be no substitute. Whether or not the new proposals were approved, the program badly needed some fresh thought after five years of operation, some critical assessment of its past performance, and its future prospects. Under the circumstances, these ends could not be achieved in Vancouver, since many of the most experienced, most concerned, were not present. Discussion of the program's problems was sporadic and inconclusive. The Clark plan for a new direction was given neither clear-cut acceptance nor firm rejection. It was recognized that the "wider use" of the program was desirable and should be encouraged, but no practical steps were agreed upon for reducing the time and energy expended on group services or for lessening the concentration on group organization.

THE PROGRAM'S "WIDER USE"

It can be argued that this absence of firm decision - one way or the other - on the future of group organization was the worst possible outcome. It left the whole question in a kind of limbo. It seemed to assume that a serious effort to expand the role of Citizens' Forum with the general audience was compatible with the ongoing concentration on group formation. This was at least open to question. At immediate issue was the continued use of the final five-minute segment of the broadcast for the provincial reporting of forum opinion. This broadcast period gave the provincial secretary an invaluable contact with groups in his or her area, and an effective means of encouraging the forming of new ones. Its retention was seen as essential to the maintenance of the group structure. Indeed the two preemptions of the period in the previous winter had provoked the strong disapproval of a number of forums and some sharp questioning from provincial offices. But, vital as it might be to group organization, it was clear that the provincial report period made little impact on the program's wide listening audience. It could be no tool for encouraging the innovative use of Citizens' Forum by a broad public.

If the organization of registered groups were no longer to be the sole or even the main concern, a strong case could be made for at least a substantial cutback in provincial reporting. An additional five-minute period on the national network, perhaps every second week, might be used effectively in a variety of ways to open up the program to new kinds of listeners and new kinds of uses. But there was no will to take what seemed to be the drastic step of reducing group services. The small neighbourhood group of friends or colleagues meeting each week to share their views and reach conclusions on the important issues debated in the broadcast was seen as central to the concept of Citizens' Forum. The group was the program's reason for being, and their number was the accepted criterion of its success. It was acknowledged that it could have other valuable uses and that a solid effort

should be made to promote them, but any move to reduce support for group organization was seen to abandon the project's original purpose. In the event no change was made in policy for several years, a period of time in which new initiatives might have been tested before the advent of television.

The break in the national network for the provincial report period remained a feature of the program until the beginning of television production in the 1955-56 season. And the half-hour national roundup broadcast, What People Say, carried on the national network twice each season, also continued to report and comment on group opinion across the country as it had in earlier years. The CAAE address and the offer of a sample copy of the pamphlet constituted the only promotion of the program on the weekly national broadcast. It is true that through the early 1950's, there was increasing uneasiness concerning group opinion reporting. Clearly it was important that "forum" opinion in a province not be represented as "provincial" opinion, and that the views expressed on the Citizens' Forum national roundup not be interpreted as the "national" view. The opinions carried in these reports were those of concerned men and women who had taken the trouble to inform themselves on the issues, to meet with others to discuss them, and to formulate answers to questions concerning them. But they were, of course, an extremely small percentage of the population in any area. All care was taken to avoid misrepresentation, but there is no question that these broadcasts became difficult to handle. If provincial secretaries faced problems in analyzing large numbers of provincial reports each week, they faced different, but often more serious ones, in coping with a small number.

The case could be made that the amount of time and attention expended on the maintenance and promotion of the formally registered group was out of all proportion to the potential for their growth. The argument that energies directed to other program purposes might have been more productive is difficult to refute. But there is some support for another view. Certainly, there was no upsurge in group formation, no new momentum, but

neither was there a very marked decline in group registration during the early 1950's. In the 1949-50 season, provinces reported just under 400 forums. By the spring of 1953, some 315 groups were functioning. This can be seen as a not negligible number given the circumstances, perhaps large enough to justify the continuance of the provincial report period on which the existence of groups largely depended. The major problem, however, was that the reporting forums were, by no means, evenly distributed across the country. Saskatchewan was fairly well holding its own, as was Newfoundland, granted the extreme difficulty of maintaining contact with groups outside St. John's in some periods of winter weather. Manitoba and New Brunswick, however, faced greatly diminishing numbers. The Winnipeg Adult Education Lunch Group, as early as the 1950-51 season, agreed that Citizens' Forum in that province could not expect to organize any number of continuing, reporting forums around the program's present content, or its present broadcast level. And the annual CF conference in Toronto that spring, under the chairmanship of Stuart Tweedie, confirmed that the informal use of the program was a valid aim. Alberta went further and took the step of discontinuing provincial reporting on the air in the 1951-52 broadcast series because of a lack of sufficient forum opinion on which to base an adequate weekly script. It was the continuing experience in Ontario that held the numbers fairly steady. The province had its most successful season since the early years in 1952-53, with 155 registered groups. It should be stressed that Ontario adhered to firm criteria in establishing a "group" and did not count "family registrations" or groups that reported only occasionally or that met only twice a month.

But the big break came the following season. The year 1953-54 saw a radical decline. The Community Programmes Branch of the Ontario Department of Education gave up its long provincial sponsorship of Citizens' Forum. The Department of Extension at Queen's University, Kingston, stepped in vigorously, but old connections were broken. A fair number of new Ontario groups

were organized, but many more long-standing forums in the province failed to renew their group commitment. In the country at large, there were fewer than 200 groups in the original Citizens' Forum meaning of that word.

The following season, 1954-55, brought the first cutback in provincial opinion reporting on the air. The weekly five-minute network break was retained for only the first four programs in the series, after which it was replaced by a ten-minute report period once a month.

Paradoxically, these years saw a continuing growth in the general public response to the program as evidenced in ratings and by other measures. The broadcast, The St. Lawrence Seaway: What Does It Mean To Canada And The US?, January 25, 1952, for instance, brought in more than 200 letters to the national office in the first few days. Interest in the topic was, of course, extremely high in both Eastern and Central Canada, and the division of opinion, sharp. Many listeners, including high school students at work on special projects, were anxious to obtain study material. But many other topics, less controversial, also occasioned a heavy audience mail. A literal count toward the close of the 1952-53 season (excluding those to provincial offices and to the CBC itself) produced a total of 715 letters. This was seen as a high level of public response to an "educational" program. And, but for human frailty, impossible to control, numbers would have been much higher. The chairman of the Citizens' Forum broadcast changed from week to week. Some were not as skillful as others in their management of time. Not infrequently, they would allow the panel discussion to run too long, with the result that the mention of the CAAE in the program's closing continuity would be dropped. When this happened, the Association could make no contact with the general listener. The volume of audience mail led to a wide distribution of sample copies of the weekly pamphlet and to greatly enlarged subscription lists. Many correspondents appeared to be much more than casual listeners. They spoke of never missing a broadcast, of

how they compared notes with others, and how useful they found the study material. They offered comments on the programs, and opinions on the issues. There was clearly a greater range in education and background among letter writers than among group members. All letters were answered and much office time was spent in dealing with the correspondence.

Major effort at the national office was directed toward promoting the use of individual broadcasts with organizations and community groups of many kinds. They were alerted to upcoming programs of special interest, study material was despatched, and they were urged to use the broadcast and the pamphlet as a basis for discussion within their membership. Some examples will show the kind of result it was hoped to achieve: The Canadian Mental Health Association organized groups among its branches across the country around the broadcast on, Do We Want Mental Health Programs In Our Schools?, October 30, 1952; The Hull and District Labour Council met on the subject, Are The Interests Of Labour And Management Fundamentally The Same?, January 15, 1953, and sent in a most interesting report on its members' views; the Canadian Temperance Federation formed temporary groups in several regions to discuss, What Should We Teach Our Youth About Liquor?, October 25, 1952; as a result of provincial promotion, the Education Week Committee in Newfoundland used the Citizens' Forum pamphlet extensively to arouse interest in the topic, Is It A Case Of Quantity Versus Quality In Education?, March 5, 1953, and the Home and School Association in both Manitoba and Nova Scotia organized programs around the same material.

This approach was carried out in the most systematic way during the 1953-54 broadcast season. Alan Thomas, then on the staff at CAAE, went through the full CF program schedule relating each topic on the list to the special interests of two voluntary associations. Well in advance, notice of the forthcoming broadcast and the availability of study material would be sent to the selected organizations. This effort resulted in block orders for pamphlet titles throughout the season.

The most concentrated publicity campaign for a single program was that launched for the broadcast, Equal Pay For Equal Work: Are Women Getting A Fair Deal?, December 7, 1950. The promotion was carried out with the advice and the practical assistance of the Joint Planning Commission. With access to JPC records, Citizens' Forum was in touch with some 45 women's organizations and special groups. CF offices across the country were kept informed of the action so that they might make contact with provincial units of the various bodies. Orders for the pamphlet were still arriving when the CF conference met that spring. The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs returned the most active response.

The experimental work of Mary Baty had occurred several years earlier; it provided clear evidence that almost every broadcast offered opportunities for direct service, and additional programming, with some Canadian organization. But, such work required service staff and a clear commitment, and neither was available, except on rare occasions.

LOOKING BACK: CITIZENS' FORUM AS A RADIO PROGRAM

Douglas Clark was convinced that Citizens' Forum groups should show a "sustained growth" from year to year. That this was not the case at the end of five seasons on the air, he took to be a sign of a critical weakness in the existing program structure. In consequence, he believed that decisive action should be taken to change the direction of the project. The course he advocated to meet the situation he faced, may well have been a wise one. But the question is how realistic was it to have expected a continued, long-term increase in group participation? More important, could steps have been taken to ensure - or at least to make probable - a steady growth in group organization throughout the years of exclusively radio production, and of full group services?

Naturally, there are different views. Some have argued that the lack of field workers was absolutely crucial. Had the program been able to establish and maintain direct, personal contact within communities across the country, group organization could have remained an ever-growing aspect of the project until the middle 1950's. Others contend that there could be no such certainty. They suggest that a group project must possess some elements of a "movement", that is, it must be founded on a cause, a way of life, or a special interest, to survive for long after the novelty of the activity has worn off. (Here, a comparison with the Study Circles of Sweden might be informative.)

Again, the situation is seen in more practical terms. Citizens' Forum had little competition in its early years. The airways were not then flooded with news analysis and commentary, press conferences, documentaries, extended interviews with public figures, and in-depth reporting. Popular magazines still stressed the publication of fiction and did not provide either the quantity or the quality of information and critical comment on public affairs offered a few years later. Citizens' Forum filled a real need in providing network broadcasts and printed study material on

international, national, and local issues, when they were still in short supply.

Another and more theoretical view saw group organization as the victim of social change. The highly charged atmosphere of the first two or three seasons could not be sustained. The momentum inevitably slackened. The anticipated depression did not materialize. The decade of the 1950's, at least until the final years, was a prosperous one. The social protest movement died away. There was no longer the view that the world was to be remade through a national forum. This approach would argue that Citizens' Forum, as originally conceived, was essentially a short-term project. The program soon sobered into a sustained and serious effort to gain some understanding of the problems of the day, at home and abroad, and to arrive at some conclusions concerning their solution. Any hope of maintaining a "sustained growth" until the entry into television would have called for financial support for the building of a very much stronger organizational structure.

THE INTRODUCTION OF TELEVISION - PROGRAM SEASON 1955-1956

In November, 1952, the CBC inaugurated limited television production with a program schedule of 18 hours a week. By January, 1953, this had been nearly doubled, and the following season, 1953-54, brought full-scale TV production. With headquarters in Central Canada, where TV ownership was high, and where American network programs were readily available to the viewer, the CAAE was well aware of the impact of the newer medium. It early became beyond question that TV viewing was making great inroads into at least the urban audience for evening radio in large parts of the country. Not only was it "here to stay", but the Association was convinced that television had large possibilities that needed to be explored. Canadian organizations in the wide field of adult education should learn as much as possible - as quickly as possible - about TV and its uses. Television was bound to bring radical changes and adult educators should be prepared to make the necessary adjustments.

Leonard Harman, involved in the programs leading up to Farm Radio Forum, and the project's first secretary in Ontario, brought the matter up at a meeting of the CAAE National Executive as early as December, 1949. He pointed out that Fergus Mutrie, of the CBC, and a member of the CAAE Council, had been placed in charge of TV development in the Toronto area. With this support, he was convinced that the Association should begin to plan for the educational use of the medium. By the 1953-54 program season, the pursuit of this end had become a major concern. The CAAE, through the Joint Planning Commission, organized a six-day workshop in Toronto in late August, 1953, bringing together representatives of education, voluntary organizations, the churches, labour and government agencies to view the kinescopes of some outstanding American, British and Canadian programs and to discuss their points of interest under the leadership of Gilbert Seldes. The JPC, as well, took an active part in arranging TV information sessions for some of its member organizations.

Alan Thomas, on the CAAE staff that year, conducted an experimental demonstration of the use of television to stimulate the study and discussion of public issues. He secured the cooperation of a private TV station in London, Ontario, and, with the assistance of some members of the staff of the University of Western Ontario and of others in the local community, organized groups around six TV presentations, each consisting of a film in the series, World Affairs Are Your Affairs, followed by a locally-produced panel discussion. Groups were enthusiastic and the project was counted a success.

Questions concerning prospects for the televising of Citizens' Forum were first raised at the CAAE National Executive Meeting in October, 1954. Members expressed considerable support for the idea and they were urged to pass on their views directly to the CBC. The program faced a critical decision. Roby Kidd was becoming increasingly convinced that, in spite of obvious difficulties, the move to TV should be made and with as little delay as possible. In March, 1955, he took the step of writing to J. Alphonse Ouimet, General Manager of the CBC, requesting that the program be produced on television in the following season. His request received sympathetic attention. The Corporation had reached the conclusion that the urban evening audience was now substantially a television audience and that major national programs could not survive on radio alone. Arthur Stinson, the program's supervisor at CBC, was naturally eager to work with the new medium. He announced at a meeting of the CF National Advisory Board on May 16, 1955, that the CBC was giving serious consideration to carrying Citizens' Forum on both radio and television in the coming year. He pointed out as frankly as possible the disadvantages as well as the advantages for the program of television origination.

The announcement met a mixed reception, to say the least. There was, in fact, little enthusiasm for the new venture. The majority agreed, rather grudgingly, that the move was probably inevitable,

but some apprehension was evident concerning the effectiveness of Citizens' Forum on television, as well as some uncertainty about the Board's ability to function in the new situation. In the background, there appeared to be a degree of hostility to television itself in the reaction of some members.

As luck would have it, CAAE had planned no national conference for the spring of 1955: its national meetings were in alternate years. With no prospect of a general meeting bringing people together from coast to coast, it was decided to hold the Citizens' Forum planning sessions at the Association's Western regional conference to take place in Saskatoon in May. This meant that only those working with the program in the Western provinces could be involved effectively in discussing the pros and cons of inaugurating television production. Many of those present did not seem particularly conscious of the effects of TV on established listening habits and tended to consider the step a risky and unnecessary experiment.

Nor was pressure from existing groups a factor in promoting the televised Citizens' Forum. Continuing registered forums appeared deeply committed to the program in its original form. Group members, for the most part, had not rushed into TV ownership and were far from impressed with what they saw on other people's sets. They appeared to be confirmed followers of the more solid radio programs and to see TV as purely entertainment, and very light at that.

The CBC and the CAAE at national headquarters supported the decision to move to television origination much more strongly than did either those involved in working with the forums provincially, or those actually using the broadcasts as a basis for group discussion. Members of the staff at national office were aware of the many complications involved in the change and of the restrictions that the "simulcast" would impose. But they were convinced that there was no choice if Citizens' Forum were to hold and expand its large listening audience outside the group structure and maintain

its influence in the country as a major network broadcast in public affairs. They believed that the program could no longer concentrate so much of its attention on the needs of the registered, reporting forums.

It was most unfortunate that there was not a larger consensus concerning the launching of the TV program. A greater unanimity, or even a more general understanding of the reasons for the move, would have made it easier to face the inevitable difficulties when they arose.

SOME PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF TELEVISION ON THE PROJECT

The move to television had immediate practical effects:

.The 45-minute Citizens' Forum was no longer possible. This irregular program period could not be accommodated on the TV national network. Program planners were forced to settle for the half-hour broadcast. Since Citizens' Forum was produced as a "simulcast", that is the sound track of the TV broadcast became the radio program, it too was similarly reduced.

.It was not possible to break the national TV network, as had been the practice on radio, to provide the final 5-minute provincial opinion report on the air. The first television season thus permitted no provincial report period on either radio or television. Citizens' Forum provincial secretaries were provided no time on the air to report group opinion, to sustain group interest, or to promote new forums. Various ways were tried to maintain contact with groups. Some provinces were able to secure a radio period at another time of the week for this purpose, and several issued a newsletter to groups in an effort to fill some of the functions of the old report on air. The national office also prepared a fairly extensive and more general monthly newsletter for wide distribution. But, naturally, regularly reporting forums found these substitute arrangements less than satisfactory.

.The television program, in its closing continuity, gave the address of the CAAE and mentioned the availability, on request, of a pamphlet on the topic of the evening. But TV carried no announcement of the group aspect of the program. Neither radio nor TV gave the general listener any indication that the broadcasts were designed as the basis for a discussion project. Thus the program on the air did nothing to stimulate group formation.

.It was not possible to obtain an early evening program period on television. The CBC found it necessary for financial reasons to carry mainly sponsored programs up to a 10 o'clock deadline. This meant that a Citizens' Forum group using television would find itself meeting for discussion around a program which did not conclude until 10:30.

.Citizens' Forum broadcasts could no longer originate in small communities before public m ings. They must be scheduled for one of the five television production centres across the country. Studio audiences were still possible, but there could be no counterpart of the old radio public meetings as a means of promoting the program and involving the community.

.As a result of strong representations from the CAAE and the Citizens' Forum groups, during the second season of TV production (1956-57), the 45-minute program was reinstated on radio, through a fifteen-minute addition to the TV sound track. The provincial report was carried several times during the season as part of the extended radio time on the air.

.It was clear that the 10 o'clock broadcast hour was much too late from a group point of view and the CAAE argued strenuously for a change of program period. The campaign met with success and in the second season the telecast was scheduled for mid-afternoon on Sunday. With some shift in hour, the program retained this broadcast period.

It may be questioned, with the benefit of hindsight, whether this was, in fact, a wise move. Most people would probably consider an even fairly late hour on a weekday evening a better program period than the middle of Sunday afternoon, if the object is to capture the attention of the general viewer. And, with no means of encouraging group formation with the television audience, was the hope of organizing forums around the TV broadcast not doomed to failure in any case?

In the event, throughout the existence of the program, Citizens' Forum groups continued to function on a basis of the radio broadcast, heard at an early hour on a weekday evening. The argument can be made that, in the interests of TV groups, which did not materialize, the program sacrificed an excellent evening TV hour.

The special difficulty with the TV broadcast time experienced in Ontario in the first season was simply a matter of bad luck. Citizens' Forum was scheduled for 10 o'clock on Tuesday evening, the exact hour at which The $64 Thousand Dollar Question, one of the most popular entertainment programs of the period, came into Central Canada on an American network. The audience survey for November, 1955, showed that this program garnered in 94% of the TV viewing audience in the Toronto area. At least Citizens' Forum managed to secure half of the remaining six percent.

THE TELEVISED PROGRAM

Clearly so long as the TV sound track constituted the first thirty minutes of the radio broadcast, there could be little innovation in the television presentation. The program, in fact, could be little more than a filming of the familiar radio discussion. Nothing could be carried on TV that would not be completely understandable to an audience through sound only. Those involved with the program at CBC were increasingly irked by a limitation that prevented any experimentation with the wide range of television production techniques. It was seen as an unacceptable restraint that the program, now under the permanent chairmanship of Gordon Hawkins, the CAAE's Associate Director, should be forced to confine itself to radio formats. It was recognized that the freeing of the TV production from the restrictions of radio would demand separate radio and TV originations. The CF Advisory Board early gave its support to such a course. It advanced the added argument that the radio program was also suffering from the existing arrangement. There was even some belief that a totally separate radio broadcast, geared to special group needs, might serve to hold the remaining forums and perhaps help to rebuild the old Citizens' Forum group structure.

But clearly separate originations would involve greatly increased CBC staff time and much heavier expenditures on the part of the Corporation. And few such separations - two in 1956-57 and one in 1957-58 - were undertaken in the first TV seasons. There was, however, an increasing break with the traditional panel format: debates, press conferences, inter-city discussions, informal conversations, "cross examinations", were frequently planned instead. And the additional fifteen minutes on radio were put to a wide variety of uses: talks by specialists in the subject field, comments, interviews, extensions of the panel discussion, and expansions of the question period.

This highly varied approach to topics made early planning a growing necessity. By the final meeting of the National Advisory Board in the spring, a broad outline of the program for the forthcoming season was usually ready for presentation. At least major decisions would have been already made concerning the interpretation of topics and the methods of treatment on both radio and TV. "Work Books" would be prepared by the late summer, setting out points of broadcast origination, plans for separate radio and TV productions, outlines for special series, if any, and specific ideas for the use of additional radio time. These were sent out to CBC regional Talks producers, to provincial CF offices, and to members of the National Advisory Board. Plans had sometimes to be altered, but, on the whole, the pre-planning served well.

Staff at both CBC and the CAAE also felt the need for more frequent and detailed assessment of the program during the season than could be provided by the Board. A small "working committee" was set up, consisting of Mrs. Eleanor Graham, a former editor of Food For Thought, George Gathercole, Ontario's Provincial Economist, and Professor Paul Fox, of the Political Science Department at the University of Toronto, which met for lunch at the CAAE offices every second week to offer critical comment on recent broadcasts and suggestions for the future. This informal and frank exchange proved extremely useful.

Television production presented the Association with an unanticipated by-product - the "kinescope". One copy of each program in the series was offered to the Association by the CBC on what was known as "permanent loan". That the CAAE should experiment with the use of this new acquisition as a basis for group discussion had been suggested at the CF annual conference the previous spring. In response, in the winter of 1956-57, a ten-week project was organized at the Madsen Folk School in Unionville, Ontario, a few miles east of Toronto. Called On Canada's Agenda, the meetings used selected kinescopes from the previous year, along with a kit

of related CF pamphlets and other materials. The sessions were considered to be "discussion classes" and were under the leadership of Hugh Gillis of the CBC, R.A. Best, a Toronto lawyer, and Isabel Wilson, with Peter Martin of the CAAE attending some sessions. Later in the year another program along similar lines was carried out with a group of male patients in the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital, by Diana Ironside, Isabel Wilson, and other CAAE staff members. The conclusion was that the kinescope could be useful. A recording might not provide the same sense of excitement as the live broadcast, but pre-knowledge of the content of the program enabled the leader to prepare some presentation of the subject beforehand, and to organize discussion on the most productive lines. Soon a new activity was underway in the lending out of kinescopes on specific topics to voluntary organizations for use within their own programs. It became the practice to mail mimeographed lists of all available kinescopes to a range of institutions and associations each year. Had the union regulations permitted the duplication of kinescopes, the loan program could have become a large-scale operation.

The First Series

The Winnipeg CF conference in the spring of 1958 had reenforced the proposal that the program undertake an increased number of separate radio and TV productions. The three-part Unemployment series, the following December, was the first major step in this direction. It also, for the first time, fulfilled the old request for a group of related broadcasts on a single theme. A small group of advisors was organized to meet with CBC and CAAE staff on the four Monday evenings before the opening program to discuss the series as a whole, attempt to clarify the issues, to define the areas to be covered in each broadcast and to consider methods of presentation. The same basic material would be dealt with on radio and television, but, with separate broadcasts, television would be free to use appropriate visual means to convey complicated information. The group of consultants consisted of: Harry Waisglass, Research Director of the United Steelworkers, Anthony Hampson, of Burns Brothers and Denton Ltd., investment dealers, Dalton Robertson, Assistant Investment Editor, Financial Post, Douglas Hartle,

Department of Economics, University of Toronto, Warren Main, School of Business Administration, University of Toronto, and George Gathercole. Staff members were: Gordon Babineau, TV producer, Christina McDougall, radio producer, Gordon Hawkins, broadcast chairman, Arthur Stinson, CBC program supervisor, and Isabel Wilson. Most of the consultants took some part in the actual broadcasts, and Douglas Hartle supplied the material for the much expanded single pamphlet. The three-part series, Education For Tomorrow, produced in Vancouver in the same year, was another attempt to explore a major subject in greater depth. In this case, separate radio and TV production was not involved. For the first time, Citizens' Forum study material was by-lined. Bascom St. John, Education Editor of the Globe and Mail, prepared the single, enlarged pamphlet.

Two separate radio broadcasts were also of special interest: Canada's Northland: Is Settlement A Pipe Dream?, brought from Whitehorse in the Yukon, and The City: A Lonely Crowd?, consisting largely of interviews with city dwellers.

There began to be some concern about the volume and the high quality of the mail coming into the national office. Over 2,500 letters were received during the season 1958-59, 800 of them following the Education broadcasts, and about half that number in response to the Unemployment series. A need was felt for a means of providing some report on the views being expressed by listeners. It was decided to base the third Unemployment broadcast mainly on points raised in the audience mail. Comment on listener reaction was also carried in the additional radio time on the final Education program. But it was agreed that these efforts were no real solution to the problem of making effective use of the growing listener opinion.

The greatly increased audience mail and the introduction of the expanded series pamphlets (28 pages) made it financially impossible to continue the "free on request" policy for sample copies of the study material. Regretfully, a charge was imposed - 10¢ for the regular and 25¢ for the expanded issue. Demand remained high

for individual titles, and the subscription list rose to just under 500 for the season at the national office alone. Intensified promotion, both provincially and nationally, particularly for the special series, led to much organizational use of the program and to the first really substantial pamphlet block sales. Very large orders from such institutions and bodies as the John Howard Society, the Ryerson Institute of Technology, the Canadian Conference on Education, the Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Foundation, the YMCA, the Canadian Citizenship Council, Stevenson & Kellogg, Management Engineers, and the Guidance Centre, University of Toronto, brought in revenues that several years exceeded budget anticipation. But, of course, in no real sense did the pamphlets "make a profit". The Association was responsible for the provision of office space, for [illegible] costs and for the salaries of staff.

Centralizing The Ope[illegible]

The following season (1959-60) brought a radical break with the past. As accurate a count as was possible at the end of the previous season had established the existence of no more than between 40 and 60 functioning groups across the country, with by far the largest number in Quebec and Ontario. Even so, provincial opinion reporting had been scheduled on a few occasions. The decision was now made to eliminate it altogether and to reduce the radio program to 30 minutes. Forums meeting for the entire broadcast season were now almost non-existent in most provinces. Organized discussion was taking place in workshops and special groups, or at conferences, such as the two-day event in Fredericton around the radio program, Will Money Solve Our Educational Problems?, and the one-day Vancouver meeting around the TV version of the same topic in March of 1957.

Only the national office could make contact with the growing feature of the program - the television audience. The only sensible course at the time appeared to be the centralizing of the total operation. In pursuit of this, provincial offices sent in their current mailing lists, both of group members and of

individual pamphlet subscribers. All pamphlet mailing, all records and all correspondence were now handled at the national office. The CAAE appealed, successfully, to the CBC for an increase in their grant.

A two-part series on Inflation: Let's Understand It and What It Means To You was carried on November 15 and 22, 1959, and again opinions and questions arising in the audience mail following the first broadcast were used as a basis for the second. But perhaps the outstanding program of the season was an hour-long separate radio "documentary discussion", involving some 15 people on the topic, What Can One Person Do About: Racial Discrimination?, heard on December 10. The program won a special award at the Institute for Education by Radio-Television of Columbus, Ohio, that spring. The citation read: "For mature, realistic and thought-provoking commentary on the explosive issues of our day, Citizens' Forum is a rare example of the potential of public affairs broadcasting".

Another innovation was introduced in pamphlet preparation. Two programs scheduled for January, 1960, Do You Want: A Comprehensive Government Health Plan? and Do You Want: Stricter Curbs On Trade Unions?, involved extremely controversial issues. It was believed impossible to secure a writer to prepare a truly balanced and impartial document on either subject. The personal opinion of the writer would be bound to show, it was felt, and would be difficult to edit out. Yet, each pamphlet would be subject to sharp scrutiny from interested groups. For this reason, it was decided to develop both topics on a clear pro and con basis with two writers for each topic, one advancing the pro case and one the con. Each writer would present the arguments he, himself, believed in. It was rather amusing, given some past events, that no outside writer could be found to present the anti-labour case, and this had to be drawn up in the national office.

In these years, there began to be another serious aspect to the question of the use of listener opinion in audience mail. Such

broadcasts as Resolved That: Treatment For Alcoholics Should Be Compulsory, January 18, 1959, The City: A Lonely Crowd?, particularly the radio version based on personal interviews, February 5, 1959, You The Jury: Should Drug Addicts Go To Jail?, October 25, 1959, Crime And Punishment: What Makes The Criminal?, and What To Do With The Criminal?, March 27, and April 3, 1960, were bringing a new kind of response. The program was reaching not only those interested in "exploring public issues", but people deeply involved personally in the subject matter under discussion. A few letter writers appeared close to the suicidal stage. The Association was in no way equipped to deal with this disturbing mail. Some letters were brought to the attention of people known personally to the CAAE at organizations such as the Elizabeth Fry Society, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Foundation.

Broad Themes - Combined Research

The season 1960-61, with a new program supervisor, Christina McDougall, saw a new approach to subject matter. Three-part broadcast series were organized around four major subject areas: Canada's defense, municipal problems, the family and employment. Broad, general titles were assigned to each series - Crisis In Our Municipalities, The Family In A Changing World - and no attempt was made to produce catchy, provocative titles for individual broadcasts. The idea was that this would permit Citizens' Forum to deal with an important field of interest in some depth, but leave itself free to determine the exact coverage of each segment until some investigation had been made of the broad theme. In this way, the Forum would not be committed to a specific content and approach that had seemed appropriate when it was chosen in early summer, but was, in fact, inappropriate at broadcast date. And this had sometimes happened.

As the program continued to develop around large subject areas, the Association played a significant part in topic selection. The list of outside "consultants" was continually expanded to

include more individuals and a wider range of professions, occupations and interests. From the late 1950's on, the working press across the country was consulted more systematically, as were editors and publishers. Most important, the approach to voluntary organizations for topic ideas was carried out in a more direct and organized way. Staff and executive of many associations and agencies were sent prepared forms each year calling for the submission of suggestions. In the spring of 1961 and 1962, representatives of major voluntary bodies, associated with the Joint Planning Commission, were invited to an expanded meeting of the National Advisory Board. Tentative topic proposals for the coming season were placed before them, and they were asked for their comments and suggestions.

With this use of the broad theme, came another proposal for basic change. CBC regional producers came forward with the suggestion that research done for the pamphlets should be made accessible to them during their preparation of the broadcasts. This would involve a pamphlet writer local to the production centre with whom the CBC could work closely. The result would be a double use of the information and ideas assembled and an improved relation between the printed material and the program on the air. Clearly, the proposal for combined research made great sense. But the national office foresaw some serious difficulties it felt bound to point out. All early consultation would take place on the local scene and the CAAE would remain remote from the action. And the difference in timing could be disastrous. The research would be valuable to the program people up until broadcast date, but material must be ready to go to press four weeks in advance.

The proposal for combined research, with some modifications, was carried out, and with a large degree of success. There were crises, as the correspondence reveals, but the benefits outweighed the headaches. Among those who contributed to the plan were: Frances McCubbin, School of Social Work, University of British

Columbia; Arthur C. Parks, Research Director, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council; Marcel Rioux, Department of Sociology, Carleton University; Dian Cohn, free-lance writer and broadcaster, Montreal; and William Y. Smith, Department of Economics, University of New Brunswick. The pamphlets were, of course, increasingly different in character from those prepared earlier for use in small groups. They were no longer built on a pro and con approach to controversial questions. They dealt with background fact much more extensively than with issues.

But the difficulties surrounding this change in operation foreshadowed increasing problems in the joint CBC-CAAE sponsorship. As program organizers pressed for more flexibility in the topics list, for later decisions concerning actual coverage, the CAAE found it harder to carry out its partnership role. To promote the use of the broadcasts and issue printed study material in support of them, it must know the subject matter several weeks, at least, in advance. And to offer subscriptions to a pamphlet series, it must be in a position to announce the number of publications and their content.

Another first, in the autumn of 1961, was a series of televised political debates brought from public meetings across the country. These broadcasts, with a chairman and two speakers, were organized along straight party lines and dealt with unemployment, Canada's health plan, government planning, the trade union in politics, and federal and provincial control of Canada's development. Each meeting produced two broadcasts, heard in consecutive weeks: the first, the debate itself, the second, audience questions from the floor. The pamphlets were prepared at broadcast locations. And since the programs contained nothing but argument, the written material confined itself entirely to the background.

Documentaries Can Be Dangerous

The most elaborate project Citizens' Forum ever undertook was a series of 13 television broadcasts under the general title: Industry And The Way People Live, running fro January through

April, 1962. The purpose of the series was to study the effects of technological change on communities and on the lives of the people who live in them. Broadcast locations from coast to coast were selected to illustrate a specific situation - the development of a new industry, occupation and way of life, or the decline of an old one. Some of the communities chosen were: Prince Rupert, B.C.; Whitecourt, Alberta; Elliot Lake, Ontario; Montreal; Sackville, New Brunswick; and Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. Although they contained interviews and some panel discussion, it may be that the programs, as a whole, were not sufficiently successful in conveying the theme of the series. Some viewers, apparently, saw them as essentially travelogues, and took great offence at what they regarded as a critical examination of the defects of their town. This extreme sensitivity had not been anticipated by program organizers. The complaints of the Town Clerk of Hawkesbury reached the desk of the Minister of National Revenue in Ottawa. And Gordon Hawkins, the scriptwriter and chairman, was the target of much spirited attack. "We were outraged and insulted over the program... In fact, I think every red-blooded Cape Bretoner should rise up in public indignation over the farce. To say that the genial commentator, Gordon Hawkins, was grossly misinformed is putting it mildly. Where did he get the idea that Cape Bretoners were casual workers who lived by a little hunting, fishing and blueberry picking. Let me inform him that Cape Breton has fed the best of its brains to Upper Canada, and indeed, to all of Canada, and the United States for many years".

Apart from the strong emotion it aroused in some people, the series broke new ground and was considered an achievement. It contributed to the theme of the Duke of Edinburgh's Second Commonwealth Study Conference held in Canada that year, with Gordon Hawkins its director. A specially produced pamphlet of 36 pages was prepared at the national office with great help from Professor D.J. Forster, Department of Economics, University of Toronto; and from the Department of Forestry, University of Toronto; and the Fisheries Research Board, Ottawa.

These programs were, of course, not usable on radio and an entirely different series of discussions was organized without support from printed material.

A second series of debates in the fall of 1962 attempted to bring outstanding political figures into head-on debate before public meetings. However, political tension was so high at the time that it proved impossible to use several of the topics planned or to gain the acceptance of several of the desired speakers. Fortunately, it had been decided to issue scripts of the debates rather than the usual pamphlets, so shifts of topic and date were not too difficult to manage. Both series of debates were, of course, completely adapted to radio.

In the series of five TV programs on The Family: Pressures And Problems, the matters under discussion were, for the first time, presented by means of dramatic episodes. In each case, the dramatized presentation was followed by 10 or 12 minutes of panel discussion. Bernard Ostry, of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, was chairman of the series. The same topics were used on radio, but with a completely different treatment. Through arrangements with private radio stations, each week two speakers were placed in different cities to receive and answer calls from listeners to that community's "open-line" program. The local host of the program introduced the topic of the week. Later, this material was edited into a weekly half-hour program for network broadcast. The same study material was suitable for both radio and TV.

The TV series, Confederation: A Century Later: Does It Still Work?, emerged from a weekend seminar in the Laurentians attended by a group of prominent English and French-speaking Canadians. The discussion, organized under broad subject divisions, formed four TV broadcasts. Since these programs were completely verbal, they were used on radio. Among the notables heard in the series were: Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Michel Brunet, Jean Marchand,

Ronald Ritchie, Frank Scott, Gerard Pelletier, and Jacques Parizeau. Again, in 1962-63, the five-part TV series, The Big City, was, like Industry, highly visual as well as argumentative, and thus could not be adapted to the other medium. Radio carried a separate series, Across The Borders, linking two cities in Canada, or one in Canada and one in the United States, in an exchange of views on current issues.

As television production became more sophisticated, TV producers and program directors became increasingly less willing to cooperate with an outside organization in broadcast planning. It may be that the immense public following gained by the free-wheeling program, This Hour Has Seven Days, made CBC staff even less ready to work with a series in which topics were determined months in advance, or to accept what would appear to be the restrictions involved in clearing plans with an outside body. In the 1963-64 season, under the new name, The Sixties, and with its own centrally-located production team, the program adopted a flexible topics list, open to rearrangement, or to the introduction of fresh subjects to take advantage of newsbreaks. The CAAE's publication and promotion activities demanded a large measure of certainty concerning both topics and dates. Consequently, the nature of CBC-CAAE cooperation was forced to alter under the changed circumstances. Study material could be issued only for the agreed-upon "fixed" segments of the series, and work in promotion concentrated on these segments. While the title Citizens' Forum was retained on radio during the season, the program consisted entirely of broadcasts using the "open-line" technique. This series became the basis for the program, Cross-Canada Checkup.

In the spring of 1964, a festive dinner was held in the Great Hall of Hart House, University of Toronto, celebrating Citizens' Forum's long life and bringing together many of the people from across the country who had worked in the program and for it over the years. And the CBC and CAAE did continue to pool their efforts in many important program undertakings in the next several seasons. But, these were essentially separate projects, and not part of the old "joint sponsorship".

The amazing fact is that some groups continued to try to function throughout all the changes of the final seasons. There is no use denying that their struggles occasioned much mental stress at national office. Perhaps, contemporary adult educators can figure out what should have been done about the group aspect of the program - and when.

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As will have been noticed by the reader, this account of Citizens' Forum has been descriptive and explanatory and is by no means an evaluation of impact or method. Such an evaluation, or a comparative study of Citizens' Forum and a project such as the Study Circles of Sweden, might be extremely profitable respecting what may be learned for the theory and practice of adult education. In the year, 1979, a national program, People Talking Back, which bore some resemblance to and had profited from the experience of Citizens' Forum, again involving a partnership of the CAAE and the CBC, was held with thousands of participants all over Canada. The problem of how people can be aided to study public issues and participate in the decisions about public policies is not only fascinating, but crucial to any democracy and a full review of Canada's National Platform, over twenty years of its somewhat tumultuous history, should be undertaken.

J.R. Kidd

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CAAE

Directors

E.A. Corbett	1936 - 1952
J.R. Kidd	1952 - 1961
Alan M. Thomas	1962 - 1970

Associate Directors

J.R. Kidd	1947 - 1951
Gordon Hawkins	1955 - 1960
Alan M. Thomas	1961 - 1962

Staff

Clare Clark	Executive Secretary, Joint Planning Commission, 1951 - 1956
Diana Ironside	Information Officer and Chief Librarian, 1955 - 1961 Program Officer, 1961 - 1964
Peter Martin	Special Projects Officer, 1958 - 1962
Alan M. Thomas	Program Secretary, 1952 - 1955
Isabel Wilson	Publications Secretary, Citizens' Forum, 1944 - 1948 National Secretary - Publications Editor, 1948 - 1964

Citizens' Forum National Advisory Board

Chairmen

J. Alex Edmison	Queen's University, National Parole Board
Robert Blackburn	Librarian, University of Toronto Library
Robert Torrance	National Council, Y.M.C.A.

Organizations Represented on National Advisory Board

Canadian Association of Consumers

Canadian Catholic Conference

Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Canadian Citizenship Council

Canadian Council of Churches

Canadian Council of Women
Canadian Education Association
Canadian Home and School and Parent Teacher Federation
Canadian Institute of International Affairs
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Manufacturers' Association
Canadian Welfare Council
Ontario Federation of Labour
United Nations Association
Young Men's Christian Association
Young Women's Christian Association

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Canadian Association for Adult Education